

An aerial photograph of a desert canyon. A winding river flows through the center of the image, surrounded by rugged, brownish-red rock formations. In the foreground, a large, prominent rock formation with a flat top and steep sides rises from the river. The background shows more distant, layered rock formations under a clear sky.

# Desert

TRAVEL/ADVENTURE MAGAZINE

MAY 1965

50c

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#### 46 Letters from our Readers

Mrs. Linda Gravitt, of Tahoe Valley, Calif., has won an all-expense-paid escorted tour through Death Valley, courtesy of Wanderlust Tours, for submitting the winning caption for the photograph below which won first prize in the February Photo Contest. Second choice of the judges was submitted by Harry R. Bratt, Edwards, Calif., who received a gift book certificate from DESERT Magazine.



#### FIRST PRIZE

"No, Junior, you don't eat the Beatles, you listen to them."

#### SECOND PRIZE

"I'll do the talking, Mr. Humphrey."

Although not in this issue the monthly Photo Contest will be resumed in the June edition.

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## New Books for Desert Readers

### THE FOOD AND DRINK OF MEXICO

By George C. Booth

Not only are the recipes good, but the text is informative and fun to read. Author Booth knows his Mexico and the book is chock full of anecdotes to make for good table talk while your family and friends discover there's more to Mexican cooking than fried beans.

His Huevos Rancheros (Ranch style eggs) recipe is the best this reviewer has seen. Onions, garlic, green chilis (or chopped bell pepper) are sauteed and added to tomato sauce, then poured over an egg fried sunny side up and served on a soft tortilla. To top it all off, the author suggests sliced avocado and cheese, which adds a nice fillip.

Another one is truly novel—Nopalitos Rellenos (cactus sandwiches). *Nopalito* consists of the little leaves which occur on cactus in the spring-time when it makes new growth. These may be sliced and boiled with bacon, which tastes like green beans, or boiled in salted water with soda, chopped onion and then sandwiched around a thin slice of jack cheese, rolled in flour and dipped in beaten eggs and fried and served with a sauce. But you'd better read instructions in the book before you try it.

There are also a number of "practical" cooking ideas involving vegetables, meats and fish which will do a lot to jazz up bored palates. Hardcover, 190 pages, \$5.95.

### CAPE TOWN TO CAIRO

By Lillie B. Douglass

Here's a trip that every trailer owner dreams about, but this couple took. Along with 41 American families, they joined a caravan tour and journeyed the length of the African continent by house trailer. The author tells how they solved problems of food, water, road repair, heat, cold and desert and mountain terrain. It took them seven months, but they saw Africa as few Americans have seen it. They visited Pygmy country, skirted the weird Mountains of the Moon, and wound up camped at the base of Cheops Pyramid, near Cairo.

You may not be free to make a trip to places like Zanzibar and Tanganyika, but you'll enjoy taking it vicariously with the author—even to

deciding what to pack. It's high adventure and enlightening as well, since the author's curious mind explored history and tradition along with off-beat country. And, who knows, you might one day close the door to your house and take off too? As the Douglass' discovered, anything is possible if you know what you want and direct your efforts to accomplishing it. This is that kind of a book. Hardcover, 348 pages, illustrated with maps and photos. \$6.95.

Books reviewed may be ordered from the DESERT Magazine Book Order Department, Palm Desert, California 92260. Please include 25c for handling. California residents must add 4% sales tax. Enclose payment with order.

### OLD MINING CAMPS OF NEW MEXICO 1854-1904

By Fayette Jones

Eighty-two exciting tales about early New Mexico boom camps: the salted diamonds still hidden in Lee's Peak, how Encarnacion Silva's secret mine was found near Rincon; and how George Wells brought \$90,000 in nuggets into a Hillsboro saloon. All of the famous old camps are described, most of them now little more than ghosts. This is a limited edition (600) of selected writings by the author of *New Mexico Mines and Minerals, 1904*, an out-of-print book almost impossible to acquire. Attractively printed on a hand-operated press, hardcover, 92 pages. \$4.95.

### THE GREAT CALIFORNIA DESERTS

By W. Storrs Lee

The Mojave, the Colorado Desert and Death Valley comprise the great California deserts. Here is a "biography" of desert folklore, historical significant and personal drama inspired first by Spanish missionaries and settlers in 1775, then by 19th century Argonauts wandering dizzily around Death Valley and, later, adventurers and prospectors exploiting the rich terrains of Tonopah, Randsburg, and Goldfield. Here, too, is an exciting account of early overland coach routes and railroad lines that now span thousands of miles of desert and contributed to the construction of the miraculous canal which transformed Imperial Valley into the



richest agricultural country in the U.S. today.

This is a modern, sophisticated book that rhapsodizes neither the past nor the present, but calls a spade a spade. It's a good, hard-hitting history—readable, up-to-date, and worthwhile. You'll like it. Hardcover, 306 pages, indexed. \$7.95.

#### KAIBAH

By Kay Bennett

More books have been written about the Navajo Indians than on any other subject in the West, including the movie industry. Few have captured the true spirit of the Navajo and practically all present the Navajo through the diffused eyes of the white man. Now comes a book about the Navajos written by a full-blooded Navajo who has lived both on the reservation and traveled throughout the world.

Written in simple language, evidently to capture the feelings of her people, Kay Bennett's *Kaibah, Recollection of a Navajo Girlhood*, takes you into the hogan and reveals the customs, superstitions, ceremonials and innate dignity of these proud people. The conflict between their ancient desire to remain alone and unmolested and the encroachment of the white man's civilization is graphically presented.

Illustrated by the author, the hardcover 253-page volume sells for \$7.95.

#### POWERBOATING THE WEST COAST OF MEXICO

By Spencer Murray and Ralph Poole

From Guaymas to below Puerto Vallarta the authors traveled along 1500 miles of shoreline in a 21-foot keel named Peggy Sue III. They talked to Seri fishermen and Yaqui soldiers, battled with storms and landed in jungle spots that have never known an automobile nor resounded with the whir of a motor boat. The book describes ports, supply points, villages, docking facilities, customs and sailing regulations along Mexico's west coast. It is a complete guide for boat owners who anticipate a similar trip as well as for armchair navigators. Illustrated with exceptional photos by Mr. Poole. Hardcover, 305 pages, \$6.75.

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# Playground for Boaters

by Frank Jensen



**L**AKE POWELL is one of the West's fastest growing playgrounds. Nearly 200,000 boaters, campers, fishermen and sightseers used the lake last year and, according to Park Service estimates, nearly double this number are expected to converge on Lake Powell in 1965.

There is good reason for Lake Powell's popularity. Extending 180 miles in northern Arizona and southern Utah, it is surrounded by the most spectacular desert country in the West. Among its attractions are Rainbow Bridge, the largest known rock span in the world; Escalante Canyon, with smaller arches and verdant alcoves; and Hole in the Rock, where Mormon pioneers crossed the Colorado River nearly a century ago.

Lake Powell's meandering side canyons are also legion in number. The boater with a yen for exploration and adventure can pick his way through hundreds of miles of slit-like gorges—some with the descriptive names of Twilight Canyon, Dungeon, Cathedral Canyon, and Hidden Passage. There is also many a snug cove or sandy beach along the lakes 1800 miles of shoreline where one can camp, swim, or water ski in waters warmed by desert sun. At Lake Powell the boatman is king, whether he commands a yacht or a simple kayak.

Trout, largemouth bass and kokanee salmon have been planted in Lake Powell in the past two years and

their growth is phenomenal. The largest bass weigh up to five pounds, while the record trout weighed out at seven pounds, four ounces. There are also catfish and rainbow trout below the dam.

In the next 10 years the National Park Service and concessionaires will spend \$20 million developing the shoreline of Lake Powell.

Most of this development, so far, has been concentrated in the Wahweap and Lee's Ferry area, where roads and accommodations already exist. At Wahweap, six miles from the dam in northern Arizona, the Park Service has built a 112-site campground and is presently adding some 1200 feet to the main launching ramp so that it may be used this year. The concessionaire, Canyon Tours, Inc., is also constructing a steel pontoon dock for public use. The dock will double the 30-slip capacity of the present marina. At Lee's Ferry, 16 miles below the dam (and 50 miles by road) a campground with sheltered sites, a paved road system, and temporary boat launching ramp have been built by the Park Service.

Sometime this spring a unique floating complex will be towed up-lake from Wahweap to Aztec Canyon where it will be moored temporarily at a site below Rainbow Bridge National Monument. The complex consists of three large barge-like floats, surmounted by steel walkways and five house boats. It con-



tains its own sewage and water purification systems, power generating units and will serve as a public dock and headquarters for park personnel. When the water rises sufficiently, the float will be anchored permanently at the Narrows of Bridge Canyon, about a mile and a half from Rainbow Bridge. This transfer, however, is not expected to take place for at least another season, since Lake Powell will be maintained at its present level during this year's run-off to re-fill Lake Mead.

Between 1903, when Rainbow Bridge was declared a national monument, and the beginning of the construction of Glen Canyon Dam in 1956, it had been seen by less than 15,000 persons. Last year nearly 6000 hiked to Rainbow Bridge and, in time, the massive stone span is expected to be one of the most viewed attractions of the Lake Powell region.

There are two Lake Powell concessionaires presently operating in Utah. One of them is at Hall's Crossing, the other at North Wash, near the now inundated ferry boat crossing at Hite. Hall's Crossing is about 100 miles from the dam by boat and an equal distance by car, traveling either from Blanding or Mexican Hat. The concessionaire is Frank Wright, an affable boatman known as the "Dean of the River Runners." At Hall's Crossing Wright has installed a 4800-foot airstrip, a launching ramp, and a dock with mooring facilities for a limited number of boats. Gas and oil, fishing and boat supplies and trailer accommodations are also available (See DESERT, Sept. '64).

Hall's Crossing is directly opposite Bullfrog Basin, a site slated for development as a major recreation area. At Bullfrog, the Park Service has installed a 1500-foot launching ramp,



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a circulatory road system, water supply system and utilities. A road, accessible by jeep or pick-up truck, runs from Hanksville to Bullfrog, a distance of 60 miles. However, the Bullfrog site is not expected to be ready for public use for at least another year.

If you really want to get away from the crowd, then patronize the Hite Marina at North Wash. This northernmost concession on Lake Powell is operated by Gay and Joan Staveley, a husband and wife team who, like Frank Wright, are former river runners. The Hite Marina is

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about 180 miles from the dam and 45 miles up-lake from Hall's Crossing. By automobile, it is 45 miles from Hanksville, and 85 miles from Mexican Hat via Utah Highway 95. Groceries, boating and fishing supplies and trailer accommodations are available here, as they are at Hall's Crossing.

Roads leading to the Hite Marina and Hall's Crossing are not paved all the way but they can easily be traversed by passenger car, although summer rains sometimes create ruts and washboard areas. They also emphasize Utah's problem regarding Lake Powell—that is, a lack of access to the middle and upper reaches of the reservoir. Three bridges, costing some \$3 million are now being built across the Dirty Devil and Colorado Rivers above Hite and across North Wash. While these bridges will eliminate the ferry—which will operate for the last time this year—they will lead nowhere, as they will connect with existing Utah 95, a semi-primi-

tive gravel road that spans the south-central portion of the state. It is estimated that an additional \$13 million will be needed to bring Highway 95 to standard. The project could take 10 years.

Another Utah road leading to Lake Powell, known only to aficionados of the back country, parallels the Kaiparowitz Plateau 70 miles between the town of Escalante and Hole in the Rock, where Mormon settlers made their historic crossing. From the rim, overlooking the lake, you climb 800 feet through a narrow, rock-filled slot, to reach the shoreline, however. Then there's a fifth county road built that enters the National Recreation Area at Warm Creek, a few miles north of the Wahweap site.

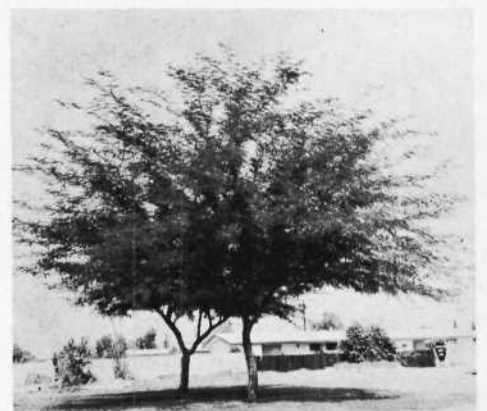
Studies are under way to determine the best access to Lake Powell, although the isolated and rugged character of the land will preclude anything but a costly and long range program of road construction. ///

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## UTAH'S CANYONLANDS

by Jim Cannon



"UTAH HAS more sculptured earth per square mile than any other state or province on earth."

That was the expression of an enthusiastic Utah visitor after he recently traveled over the state. Similar opinions have been expressed by eminent geologists who have studied the physiographic features of Utah, and especially the scarred, eroded southeastern sector.

The federal government recently paid particular attention to part of this beautiful wilderness by designating 257,640 acres as Canyonlands National Park with a center point of the confluence of the Green and Colorado Rivers, and bordered on the north by Dead Horse Point State Park, and on the south by the great new Glen Canyon Recreation Area. In between, within the national park boundaries, lie the Needles, Land of the Standing Rocks, Grandview Point and Upheaval Dome, and thousands of sculptured masterpieces of multi-colored sandstone.

South and east of the junction of the two canyon-cutting rivers (the Green and the Colorado) the new park includes the 55,000 acre area dubbed The Needles, a region in which meadowlands and natural "parks" are shadowed by monumental rock spires and pinnacles carved into odd, multi-colored forms by eons of erosion. Just west of the confluence of the rivers is a 25,000 acre maze locally known as "The Land of Standing Rocks." Here, only partially explored, and inaccessible except by horseback or four-wheel drive vehicles, fantastic rock "fins" rear nearly 1000 feet high, standing in soldier-like ranks.

On the north, Canyonlands National Park includes plateaus and mesas rising over 7,800 feet above sea level, and the low-lying basin lands at the water's edge of the two cliff-rimmed rivers. Above the confluence are Grandview Point with vistas comparable to those seen by millions at Grand Canyon; Upheaval Dome,

Mitch Williams'

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Gazing at the surrounding country from the Dead Horse Point State Park shelter just outside the federal boundaries, or peering from the rim-rock of Grandview Point, the visitor glimpses scenery of a sort found nowhere else in the nation, although the view is often compared with that at Grand Canyon. From Canyonland overlooks, the Green and Colorado Rivers are silver ribbons cutting nearly a half-mile deep through benchlands and inner gorges. South and west across the rivers the Needles and Land of Standing Rocks rise in sharp relief. Farther off to the south, the broad hump of Abajo Mountains provides another major landmark; to the northeast the red rock formations surrounding Moab and Arches National Monument contrast sharply with the snow-tipped peaks of the 13,000-ft. high La Sal Mountains. The National Park Service plans perpetual preservation of the wilderness character of the western part of Can-

Angel Arch went undiscovered until 1955.



yonlands, but is working now on better road access to the park on the north and south.

Visitors in 1965 can reach some park areas in their passenger cars. On the north, Island in the Sky (Grandview Point) is accessible over about 18 miles of unpaved, graded dirt road extending south from the Dead Horse Point turnoff (the remaining 15 miles of this access road, between U.S. 160 and the turnoff, will be hard-surfaced by summer). Or more adventurous drivers can take paved State 279 from Moab to the Texas Gulf potash mine on the Colorado River, continuing from there on a graded dirt road that winds along the White Rim below Dead Horse Point and eventually switchbacks up the vertical Orange Cliffs via Shafer Trail to a junction with the Grandview Point Road.

In the southern sector, from U. S. 160 at Church Rock (15 miles north of Monticello), you can enter Canyonlands with a bonus side-of-the-road view of Newspaper Rock State Park where hundreds of 1000-year-old petroglyphs and pictographs decorate a sheet of sandstone. From there the road leads on down Indian Creek Canyon, past the old Dugout Ranch and Sixshooter Peaks to Squaw Flat, about 40 miles from the main highway. Though dusty, the road to here



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is passable for ordinary cars. Squaw Flat affords an excellent closeup view of the Needles-Salt Creek-Junction country in panorama, but from there on the roads are strictly for jeeps, trail scooters, or hikers.

Deeper in the back country lie such features as Angel Arch, a sandstone "bridge" carved by wind and water, guarded by a figure resembling an angel with folded wings. This region is so wild and inaccessible that Angel Arch and other impressive scenic and geologic features were only discovered and named in 1955.

Portions of the new park can be safely entered by boat—it being feasible to bring small powered craft down Green River from the town of Green River, Utah, or along the Colorado from Moab, to the confluence of the streams. However, Cataract Canyon, just below the junction of the Colorado and its major tributary, bars safe river access to the lower portion of the park except by river craft handled by expert boatmen and guides.

With establishment of Canyonlands, unique Utah joins California as the only state in the union with more than two national parks. ///

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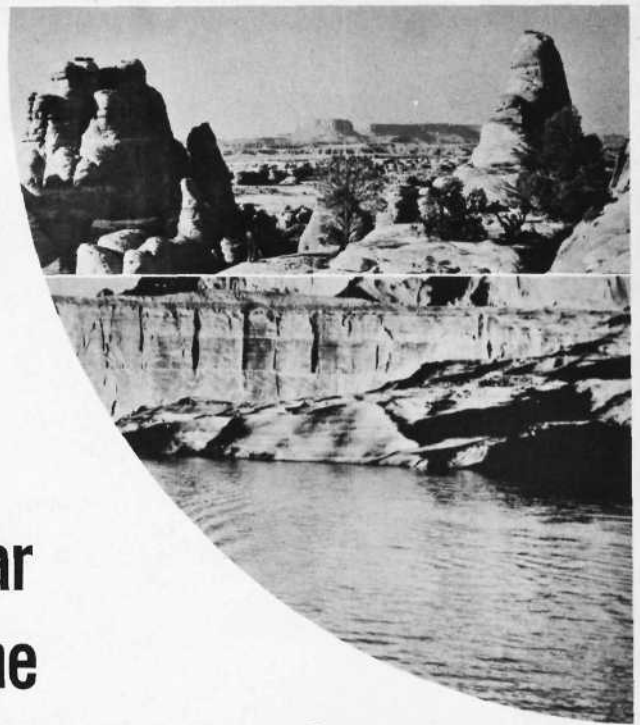
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## THE GHOST OF COAL CANYON

by Lynn and Willis Kinnear

**I**T NEVER FAILS to happen . . .

When, on a vacation trip, all points of interest are meticulously visited, surrounding areas gone over with a fine tooth comb, then, later, you find out the comb had teeth missing!

Several years ago this happened to us. After a number of days spent exploring the country around Tuba City, Arizona, we moved on to Moab, Utah. No sooner had we slid into town, than someone asked us, "Did you see Coal Mine Canyon?" Meekly we replied we had not, and then sat quietly while we heard of its unique beauty and interest.

The only redeeming feature about a situation like this is that it presents a valid excuse for a return visit—this we finally accomplished last summer. Before reaching Tuba City we stopped for gasoline and requested directions to Coal Mine Canyon.

"Do you know about the ghost of the canyon?" we were asked. Our informant knew no details, but suggested we inquire in Tuba City. He advised us not to ask the Indians, however, believing they would be reluctant to talk about it. Intrigued, we boldly headed for the Navajo Police Headquarters in Tuba City.

The officer we spoke to turned out to be the most talkative person we'd encountered in a long time so, in spite of the fact he was a Navajo, we asked about the ghost. Glancing at the calendar, he suggested we return in about a week. That would be the

time of the full moon when the ghost appears, usually about 8:30 at night. There would be no missing it, he assured us. Rising from the depths of a canyon tributary, its large, luminous figure would gradually increase in size, moving back and forth in a wraithlike dance until it vanished into the dark.

There is no explanation for the phenomenon, he explained, although three possible causes have been advanced. One is that the full moon's light bounces off the startling white portions of canyon walls. Another is that a fluorescent property in the rock shows up unusually well with the full moon.

The third, and most fascinating explanation, lies in a legend. In the far past a squaw is said to have flung herself over the cliff for a timeless reason—trouble with a man. Then, for another timeless reason, her ghost returns with each full moon to haunt her former abode, in way of having the last word.

When we headed for Coal Mine Canyon, it was bright daylight. Not that we were wary of seeing ghosts, but a week's wait was a bit too long. After a short drive, we reached the canyon rim. Near the parking area, we noticed an enclosed tower which covered an abandoned mine shaft. All the coal was not at the bottom of the closed shaft, however, as a thin black band dramatically accented the vivid canyon walls.





Considerable archeological work has been accomplished in this region and, in addition to uncovering ancient villages and artifacts, it has been discovered here that coal was used by aborigines of the prehistoric Southwest who occupied this area between 860 and 1250 A.D. The use of coal during this period far antedates its general use in Europe. In fact, in England as late as 1200, coal was somewhat of a novelty and curiosity.

That coal was used by early Indians to fire pottery is attested to by the finding of partly fired pots still sitting on a partially burned bed of coal. But its use extended far beyond that, as over 100,000 tons of coal were mined in the entire mesa area.

Coal Mine Canyon will long remain in our memories. The ghost we did not get to see, with either its scientific or legendary explanation, but the intricate tracery of the canyon's weather-carved walls and its wildly colored spires have left an indelible impression of Nature at work. Its almost impossible blending of colors surpasses even the most radiant of rainbows. But most of all, we cherish a strange new vision—one of snug Indian families enjoying the warmth of a hearth in desert country where fire-building wood is hard to find. ///

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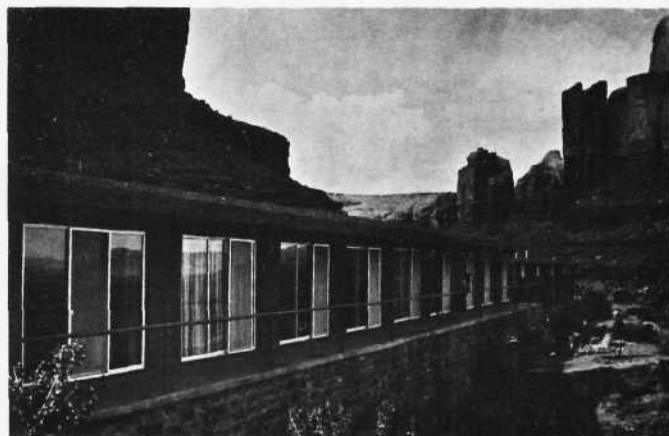
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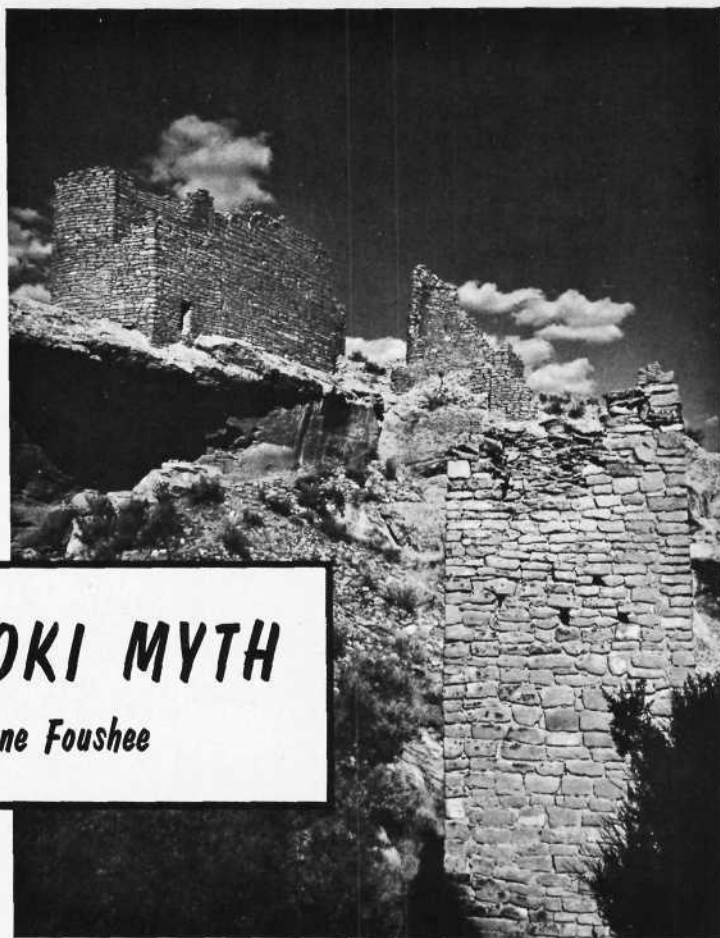
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Who built these ruins?  
Who were the people?  
Why did they go?

## THE MOKI MYTH

by Gene Foushee



**"BUT WHO** were the Moki?" That cry rang out time and again from the members of the party accompanying Secretary of the Interior Udall when he and other dignitaries explored the Canyonlands National Park area back in 1961.

Over 600-year-old cliff dwellings, surface ruins, and pictographs of the area prompted the question almost as a chorus, because genial Bates Wilson, leader of the group, (now superintendent of the new Canyonlands National Park) referred to the "Moki" as the prehistoric builders, inhabitants, and artisans of the region. That should have been sufficient, but it wasn't enough for the fact-hungry press who were tagging along. They insisted on knowing if "Moki" referred to the pottery, the cliff dwellings, or the past people; and if to the people, what kind were they? Where had they come from and how could they be defined?

The question couldn't be satisfactorily answered because technically there were no such people or culture. The term "Moki" spelled anyway you like, has erroneously come into usage in southern Utah for everything relating to the prehistoric pueblo builders. To some they were pygmies, as indicated by the tiny rooms. To others they were warriors who lived in fortress-like stone houses. My wife

thinks they were key-shaped people to fit through the keyhole-shaped doorways!

There is the word *Moqui*, an opprobrious term used by the Zuni for the Hopi pueblo people of northern Arizona. Inasmuch as the early Spanish explorers and conquerors were unable to defeat the Hopi villages, no doubt they were delighted to use the derogatory term for Hopi people. However a similar word *Mookwi* seems to have been an acceptable native Hopi tribal name which they called themselves. Another Ute word for the Hopis was *Mowwits*, but that also carried the derogatory connotation of the "deadhead ones." In our area today, Ute Indians call the prehistoric ruins "Moki houses," meaning Hopi houses. Without bogging down more in the orthography of "Moki," suffice it to say that the word referred to the Hopi village people, either as their correct name, as some evidence indicates, or as an opprobrious term for them. And as we might guess, the Hopis were pleased when late in the 19th century the anthropologists abandoned the earlier terms for the word *Hopi*. This was short for Hopituh Shinumo, "the peaceful people," the name by which they were said to call themselves.

All of this has told us who the "Moki" were not, but who were they?

The Navajo people have a melodious name for the prehistoric pueblo builders. It is "Anasazi" (Anna Sah-zee) meaning "the ancient ones." Anthropologists have adopted this Navajo name for the ancient apartment-house-dwelling farmers who departed from this Four Corners country about 1300 A.D.

Now with the proper name established, briefly, who were the Anasazi, and where had they come from? Here is a quote by Dr. Jesse Jennings from *Indians of Utah Past and Present*, "Scientific opinion is unanimous that the Indian is an immigrant to North America from Asia. Small groups came overland from Asia by way of the Bering Straits or some other land bridge and fanned out over both North America and South America at a time when the sea level was lower than now because of the vast amounts of water locked up in the glacial ice fields of 10,000 to 15,000 years ago."

Thousands of years passed with small bands living, foraging for food, and barely eking out an existence. With the introduction of corn, squash and beans from Mexico sometime before 300 A.D. and the knowledge of how to raise them, the stage was finally set in the Four Corners country for the development of towns, organization, and religion; in short, the dramatic Anasazi culture. So



essentially the Anasazi people of southeast Utah lived there between 300 A.D. and 1300 A.D.

Cultural centers developed and exerted influence on the surrounding rural areas; although the people and culture were basically the same throughout the Four Corners area and large portions of Arizona and New Mexico. Southeast Utah was most closely related to the Mesa Verde cultural center. Judging from the high density of pueblo ruins in the Bluff area of the San Juan River valley, population appears to have been far greater in Anasazi times than today. Within the town of Bluff there are at least five sets of Anasazi pueblo ruins, both surface and cliff dwellings. Up Cottonwood Wash and out toward St. Christopher's Mission there are remnants of cliff dwellings all the way. And, incidentally, "cliff dwellers" were the same people as those who built pueblos in the open. The classic surface pueblos of Hovenweep National Monument are believed to have been built by Anasazi people who moved from Mesa Verde. As the population grew it was necessary to move to new locations, due to the limited farming areas surrounding the pueblos.

The use of the word "farming" can only be totally misleading when compared with modern ideas of farming. This Four Corners country was as arid then as it is today. Two factors made it possible for them to grow enough corn, beans, and squash, not just to survive, but to develop and sustain an impressive culture.

First, before the Spaniards came to the Southwest, bringing livestock which stripped and is continuing to strip the range of its natural protective cover of grass and brush, meager rains were trapped and held in the ground to create a true watershed and sustain more permanent springs and streams. Today most of the overgrazed Southwest is characterized by steep-sided dry washes which rage with flood waters following rainstorms.

Evolving as farmers, the Anasazi were keenly aware of the importance of moisture to their crops; therefore they carefully watched where the moisture was, and there they would plant all the seeds that would grow. Usually their farming would turn out to be in small patches, taking maximum advantage of all the rain that fell. Sometimes they used more sophisticated methods of diking, terracing, and flooding to better utilize the water. And to prove that these methods of farming could actually

work, the Hopi village people are using them successfully today in northern Arizona!

If everything were so hunky-dory for the Anasazi, with their stone houses, smoke-shops (kivas) for the men, gardening and pottery-making for the women, dog and turkey pets for the kiddies, then why did they abandon our gorgeous red rock canyon country? Anthropologists tell us that a drought began in 1276 and continued until 1299. No doubt this was a major factor, but there were probably others that fostered social unrest, malnutrition, shorter growing seasons and worn-out soil. Marauding Navajos and Apaches no doubt contributed, too. In any event, by 1300 A.D. the Anasazi people, with their high and complex culture had abandoned the Four Corners country.

So out of the desert grew a people who without metal tools built stone houses which grace the canyon country these 600 years later. Their pictographs cut into the canyon walls are still visible. Five miles down the San Juan River from Bluff (most easily seen on a one-day river trip) is a cliff covered with six-foot high ceremonial figures, the best example seen in the Four Corners.

But the white man of today, the Sunday-afternoon digger, can do more damage to the Anasazi sites than 600 years of nature. In most areas of the Southwest the prehistoric ruins are legally protected by an Antiquities Law which forbids digging and otherwise disturbing or damaging ancient remains on public lands. This law is administered through the Bureau of Land Management. Inasmuch as the B.L.M. cannot be all places at all times, the responsibility of protection of the dramatic prehistoric ruins falls to each of us who thrills at seeing the evidence of the Anasazi, and who likes to think that his descendants 600 years from now may continue to enjoy these legacies left by "the ancient ones."

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Old Explorer's map printed in San Francisco in 1874.

**A** CYNIC ONCE told me that the relationship of history to legend is precisely that of a married man to a bachelor—purely a matter of mother-in-law. The two men are just alike, but the married man has to prove where he's been!

Along the insecure borderland where history overlaps legend, stretches the golden trail of Elder Ezekial. Parts of the trail shine with solid fact, some sections are muddled by retelling, the rest is dimmed with the dust of a dozen decades.

Enough people in the old days saw and handled those large, wonderful pieces of deep rose quartz with paisley patterns of gaudy gold to rule out any question of the bonanza's existence. We can pinpoint the trail on both sides of the money country, but the exact route of the Elder and his party when they discovered the lode remains to be mapped by a lucky finder.

I heard one version of the story from my friend Gene Stoddart—"the white Indian" of Ely, Nevada—when we were out hunting an abandoned stage coach reportedly seen by deer

hunters. Two other sources must remain anonymous, and the rest comes from two old letters written during the days of Nevada boom camps, which are in the collection of a wealthy California couple.

These letters were written about three months apart to a Mr. Johnson, a businessman of Eberhardt, Nevada, who was probably the same man who ended the local boom town "two-bit era" by introducing dimes into an economy whose smallest coin had, until then, been quarters. Forever after he was known as "10c Johnson." The letters concern arrangements to pay for a mouse-colored riding mule "of good gait, and a disposition fathered by Satan himself." The mule was bought for a prospecting trip to look for the ledge "as rich as King Solomon's mine that was found to the east of here by the Mormon and his wives some 16 years ago." The writer goes on to say, "I have joined a co. of three other stout fellows, we are well armed and mounted and of sanguine spirits; for Mr. Bradclaw (or Brad-

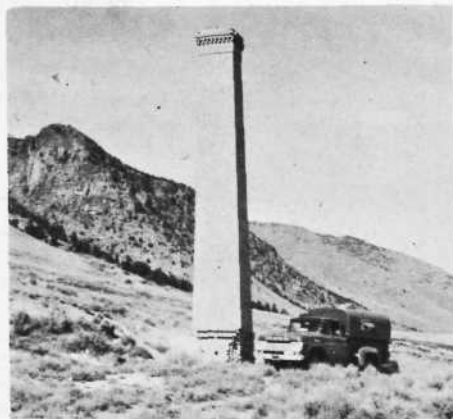
shaw) has a large piece of the ore and directions direct from the trader who delt (sic) with the Mormon." How good those directions are, remains to be seen.

Here, then, is the patchwork journal of the Elder's tragic journey. Personal names of the Elder's household have been changed for obvious reasons, but route records are as accurate as I could work them out.

In the spring of 1858 or 1859 Elder Ezekial departed hurriedly from his holdings near Lehi, Utah, headed past the present town of Grantsville and out across the Salt Desert on a beeline for the well-known spring below Pilot Peak north of Wendover. Some say his ultimate destination was simply California; others say it was Genoa, the Mormon station at the eastern foot of the Sierras.

The reason for his haste is obscure. This was during the time of the schisms in the Church and that may have been the cause. The Elder's party consisted of two wives (some say three) and two helpers: a half-grown Mexican apprentice named Emanuel

*The brand of boom camps still marks the land. Ruin was bank in Hamilton, Nevada. Charcoal oven in Diamond Mountains is in the search area.*





or Manuel, and an older employee known simply as Joel. Ezekial's first wife was Hannah, the second Judith; I don't know the name of the third wife, if there was one.

In their haste, they took only essentials, but they did seem to be well supplied with powder and shot, and had a string of good animals. My Utah friend said they started out in two light wagons, but the letters indicate they were reduced to "hoof and horseback" when they finally met the trader northeast of Austin (north central Nevada).

Several days were spent camped at the sweet spring below Pilot Peak to rest and graze the stock, after the arduous crossing of the bitter white Salt Desert. Then the group headed south, skirting the western edge of the salt flats.

Just before sundown, on the third day from the springs, they were hit by a small war party of Goshute Indians. Armed with bows, lances and a few old black powder smooth bores, the Indians figured the little bunch of whites for a pushover, but the pushover turned into a hornet's nest. The women were dexterous in reloading, the men good shots, and the Elder fought like he preached—with fervor. Before the Indians were repulsed, however, one wild buck fired an arrow into Judith's neck, killing her instantly. Then followed a long, terrible night of fear and waiting until dawn, when the Indians left, taking their dead—and several of the Elder's horses.

Judith was wrapped in a blanket and buried in a shallow grave. With no way or time to make a suitable marker, they set up a greenish rock for a headstone and scratched with a knife an epitaph into her pewter plate which read, "Judith, b'lv'd. wife of Ezekial—." This was buried with her cup, beneath the headstone.

After Judith was buried, the Elder took his frightened little group "as straight W.S.W. as the rough mountains permitted them." Their progress was slow, as they were understandably wary of another Goshute ambush. The morning of the second day they "came to a fine warm spring, with good graze close by" where they refreshed themselves and the horses and held prayer services.

The night of the third or fifth day (stories differ) they camped beneath an overhang on a bench-like flat "some distance above the valley floor, where there was a little water." With their backs to the rock, they felt secure against assault, but they were wrong.

At dawn came another screaming

attack by a small war party and it was bloody, wild and brief. Most casualties were Indian, however, as moments before the charge occurred, a horse whinnied and alerted the Elder's party. Mormon guns proved to be "bad medicine" for the Indians and they took off fast.

The attack was seemingly over when a sudden shower of cobbles from the rocks above crushed the skull of the boy Emanuel. His killer fell beside him, a lead slug in his entrails, and was finished off with a gun butt.

When the Elder was sure his attackers were gone, he buried Emanuel in the nearest soft ground. Ezekial and Hannah dug the grave without help as Joel had been wounded in the groin by a ricocheting arrow. It was then, while digging the grave, that the Elder found the ore. He apparently knew its value, for he put a number of large pieces in his saddle bags. In view of his limited tools, the ore was probably float, washed down to the bench from a higher ledge.

All sources attest to its richness and both my Utah friend and the letters indicate it was dark red rose quartz splattered with gold, like the pattern of a paisley shawl.

At the wagons, the Elder traded some of the ore for flour, a small firkin of lard, sugar, camphor for Joel and gunpowder. The Elder's party visited with the trader a little, told of their tragic journey and warned of the Indians. Then the Elder headed his little band westward into the mute shadows of time.

I can't guarantee that you'll have any better luck than I did as far as gold is concerned, but you might find one of the wood-ceramic-iron "hook" insulators from the old telegraph line that are becoming collector's items. Nevada State Senator G. F. "Casey" Fisher of Ely presented me with one from his collection, which is now on display in the DESERT Magazine office. Also, I don't know of a more scenic, interesting country or better potential prospecting area than this. Years after Elder Ezekial passed that way, a little to the south—near Hamilton—old timers hacked \$3,000,000 of silver and gold from a single hole 70x40x25 feet; and the following spring, two indigent prospectors tore down their winter "dug-out" home because its rock walls were worth \$75,000.

As far as incentive is concerned, that's good enough for me! ///

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# THE POKE AND POSEY WARS

BY CHARLES KELLY

**B**RIGHAM YOUNG believed it was cheaper to feed the Indians than to fight them, but the Ute Indians of San Juan County, particularly a pair known as Poke and Posey, did not appreciate this policy. They figured the country belonged to them, horses, sheep or cattle found on the land belonged to them and that settlers were stealing water and grass from their hunting ranges. This led to trouble.

One Mormon Bishop stated that a white man was killed by the Indians every year for 40 years, and he is no doubt correct. Settlers at Bluff grazed their herds on a virgin range and they multiplied rapidly. Whenever Indians grew hungry, they killed a beef rather than hunt deer. They stole horses and cut fences to pasture their ponies on the white mens' gardens. Mormon settlers put up with this situation for 35 years.

Then the boom fell and two of the last Indian wars of the wild West occurred in San Juan County. The final one, the Posey war of 1923, is well-known, but one that preceded it, the Poke War of 1915, is here recorded for the first time.

Posey was about 42 years old and Poke was 10 years older. Posey was married to Poke's young and very beautiful sister. Poke had a grown son, Tse-ne-gat, who had not one redeeming feature; he was all bad and a constant trouble maker. During the summer the Indians lived in various locations in the canyons of the high country, Allen's Canyon being one of their favorite haunts. They had no reservation and no individual holdings. During winter they moved down to San Juan River. After Bluff was settled, they made their winter home near the mouth of Cottonwood Wash, a short distance downstream from Bluff.

In February 1915, Poke's son, Tse-ne-gat, killed a Mexican shepherd named Jose Chacon and appropriated his savings of \$300, his camp equipment and supplies. At that, the settlers determined to put an end to Tse-ne-gat's outrages so they sent for Aquilla Nebeker, U. S. Marshal in Salt Lake City.

Nebeker was a typical old time U. S. marshal, weighed about 300 pounds, wore a handlebar moustache,

and didn't like to ride a horse. He went to Blanding and, except on one occasion, conducted his operations over the new telephone line. Unsuccessful at organizing a posse himself, he phoned to Cortez and asked the sheriff there to bring one in. In addition, he recruited some Navajo police from the Navajo Indian Agency and a posse from Bluff. Altogether, his command consisted of 60 men—a force that should have subdued the Indians without too much trouble. But his campaign turned into a comedy of errors.

Indian agent Jenkins and 10 Navajo police tried to arrest Tse-ne-gat at Poke's camp. Although the Navajos hated the Utes, they were under instructions to make the arrest, but avoid battle. As they approached the camp, Poke started shooting. The posse responded by loping back to Bluff as fast as they could, without accomplishing a thing. Poke then moved his camp to Cottonwood Wash where the Indians could protect themselves by shooting from large boulders.

The posse congregated in Bluff and decided to attack the Indian camp and kill or capture as many as possible, since it was evident the Utes wouldn't surrender Tse-ne-gat to the officers. As the posse approached, the Indians began shooting and a battle raged for several hours. Eight Indians were killed and 20 wounded.

An amusing incident occurred when 12 horsemen gathered on the high bank of a creek and it gave way, throwing all 12 men and horses into the creek. The Indians started shooting, so the men abandoned the horses and started down the wash on foot. During this battle, Posey's band was camped across the San Juan, but toward evening he crossed the river to join Poke. Late in the afternoon, the posse regained their horses and rode back to Bluff.

During the night, the Indians crossed over a ridge into Butler Wash where several cliff dwellings provided more protection. Posey rode near enough to Bluff to shoot into the store and cut the telephone line. When the posse arrived next morning to continue battle there was considerable shooting, but at so long a distance that no harm was done.

In the meantime, Nebeker had collected 50 more men, including a group from Cortez, and with this army he started for Bluff. Next day he rode at the head of his army. As they approached the Indian camp and bullets began to fly, he presented such a wide target that he thought better of his plan, and instead of charging, led his army back to Bluff at top speed. That was the end of this operation.

Since two posses and the Navajo police had been unsuccessful Nebeker now decided to call on the U.S. Cavalry. He phoned Washington and his request was granted. Several days later the cavalry arrived, but it consisted of only two men—General Hugh L. Scott and one orderly. Scott was an old time Indian fighter and peacemaker who was known to the Indians. They arrived on March 10.

Next day General Scott and his aide rode to the Indian camp to confer with Poke. As a result, he returned with Poke, Posey, Tse-ne-gat and some other Indians who submitted to arrest. Nebeker then took them to Salt Lake City and lodged them in the state prison until their trial in federal court.

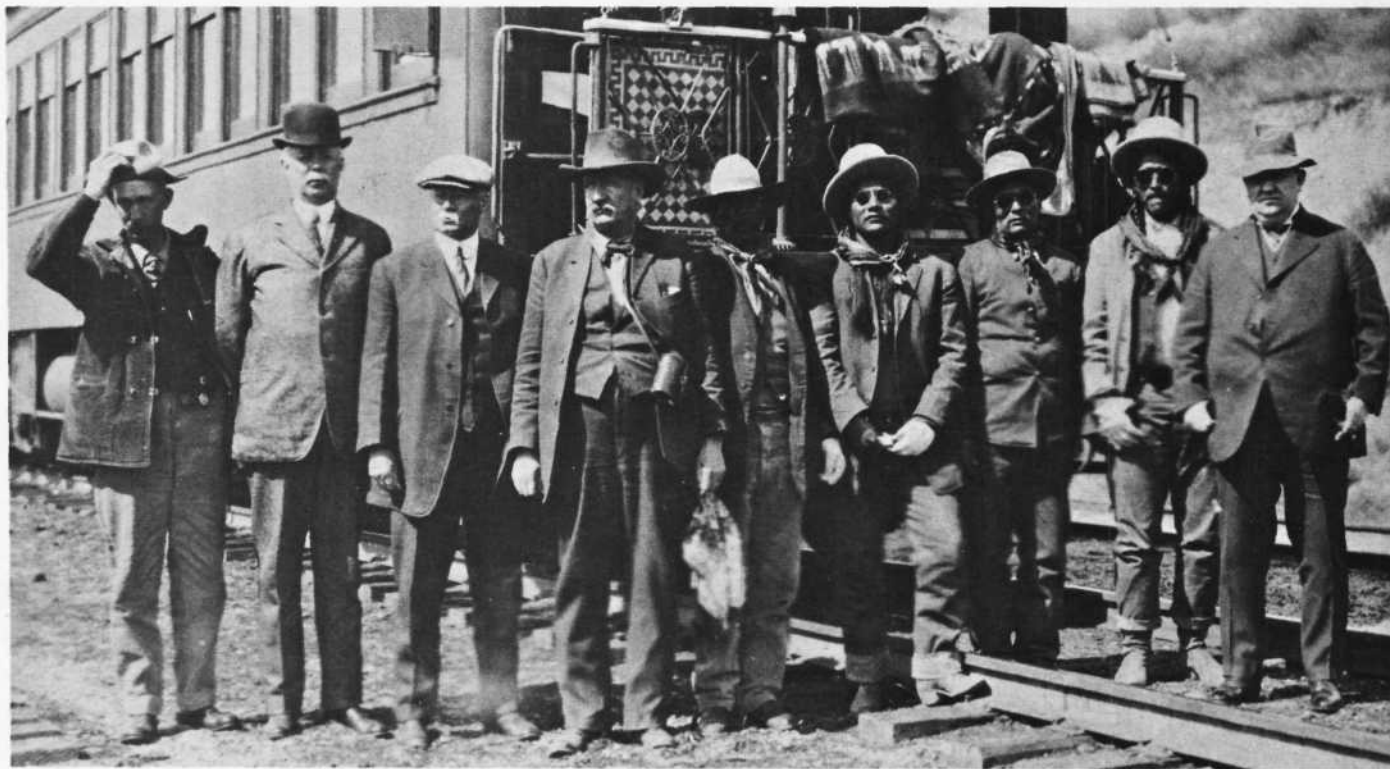
After the trial, all were freed, with the exception of Tse-ne-gat, who was held for the murder of the Mexican, Chacon, and sent to the circuit court in Denver. There he became the object of so much attention from sob sisters lamenting the plight of the poor Indian that he considered himself a hero. Eventually the court released him and he returned to Bluff to make himself more obnoxious than ever. So ended Poke's war.

The second uprising, in 1923, began in the following manner. Joe Bishop's Boy and two sons of Dutchie robbed Jens Neilson's sheep camp. Neilson had them arrested and they were tried in the basement of the school house. During the hearing, Posey was a spectator and there was considerable conversation in Ute between Posey and Bishop's Boy. At the noon recess Bishop's Boy jumped on Posey's horse, which had been tethered near the door, and made his escape.

There were a large number of Indians in town that day to attend the



History is well-acquainted with the last American Indian uprising, the Posey War of 1923, but unrecorded is the Poke War of 1915, a real TV comedy of errors exposed here for the first time by famous Utah historian Charles Kelly.



Center of photo, U. S. Marshal Aquilla Nebeker, with Indian captives taken at the end of the Poke War (1915) by Gen. Hugh F. Scott and one soldier. Left to right: Poke, Jess Posey, Posey, Tse-ne-gat. Photo courtesy Utah Historical Society.

trial. In this case no call was made to the U. S. marshal. The people of Bluff acted on their own, and swiftly, by rounding up every Indian in town and placing them under guard in a barbed wire bull pen. There were about 40 prisoners.

With these Indians secured, the posse went to Cottonwood Wash where others were camped. A battle ensued. The fight continued all day with no advantage to either side, except that Bishop's Boy was killed. In the morning a posse reinforcement from Blanding arrived, but when they went forth to meet the enemy, they discovered the Indians had all moved to Mule Canyon where they were fortified on a so-called "island," a high ridge with only one steep trail to its top. The posse started up this trail, but, being hungry, stopped at a half-way place for lunch, confident that the Indians could not escape. After lunch they continued to the top, only to find the Indians and their horses had managed to descend the opposite side along ledges almost

too steep for a mountain goat. From the "island" the posse saw Posey riding along the opposite side of the canyon, hanging on the side of his horse with only one leg showing. They fired. He dropped from his horse and hid in the willows. They believed him wounded, but could never find him.

The Indians then crossed to Dry Wash over an almost impossible trail. Having left their food supplies on the "island," the realized they could not hold out long. When the posse got within hailing distance, the squaws sent a young boy back to ask if the women and children might surrender. The offer was accepted and the women and children came out of hiding. One was sent ahead to tell the bucks to surrender, which they eventually did—all except Posey.

Word was then sent to Bluff and several trucks arrived to transport the 42 prisoners to the bull pen in Blanding. Jess, Posey's son, and two or three other young bucks were kept in Bluff, furnished supplies, and told

to go out and search for Posey. On each trip they remained several days and then returned without any supplies. The posse suspected they were supporting Posey in his hideout.

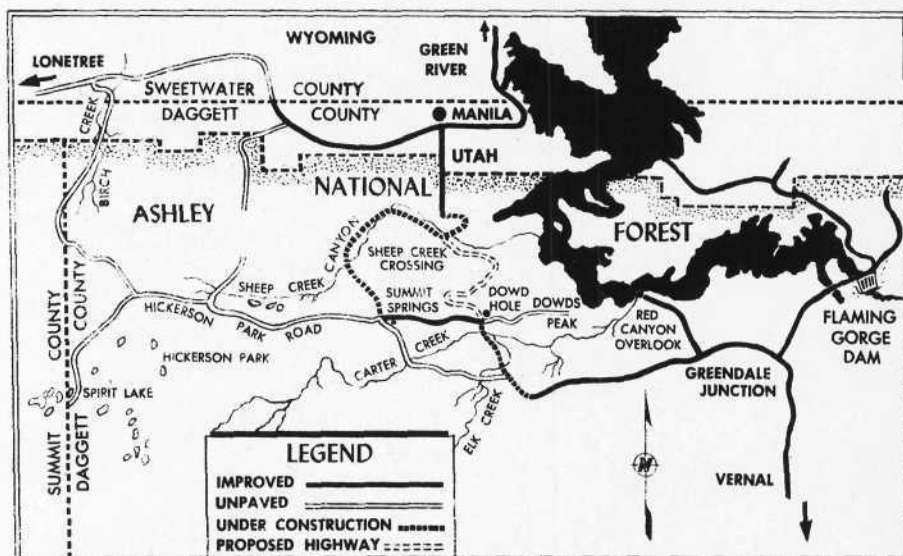
Eventually Jess Posey reported they had found his father, dead. Guided by Jess, a group of whites went out to verify the report. They found the grave and, to satisfy themselves it was really Posey, dug up the body and then reburied it. Later a group from Bluff uncovered the body to take Posey's rifle from his grave. Not satisfied with this, a third group went out with cameras and opened the grave a third time to photograph the remains. By this time everyone was satisfied that Posey, the trouble maker, was truly dead!

During this Posey war, the last Indian uprising in the United States, two Indians were killed and several wounded, but the white posse suffered no casualties.

So ended the final chapter of Indians troubles in the West. ///

# Stop the Clock at Vernal

by  
raye  
price



**A** WARNING! If you're planning a trip to Vernal, Utah, allow additional time to visit the Dinosaur Quarry and cruise around Flaming Gorge Dam. If you're open for surprises, you'll find a surprising number of them here—especially in the back country.

From U.S. Highway 40 (linking Vernal to Salt Lake City, Utah and Denver, Colorado), the scene is pretty drab, but jogging along the dirt road out of Jensen (12 miles east of Vernal) and north into the Cub Creek area, monotonous plains, change to walls of red rock, pinnacles, and canyons; you pass a few yards from petroglyphs depicting trapezoidal figures, fleeting deer and mountain sheep. Along the road are hidden Indian villages of the prehistoric Fremont culture where archeologists from the Universities of Utah and Colorado are cooperating with the National Park Service on a three-year exploratory study.

Until recent years, little was known of the Fremont culture, which dates between 800-1150 A.D., for it is difficult to identify sites from surface evidence. Artifacts tie them contradictorily to the Great Basin Tribes, Central Mexican and Northern Plains Indians, leaving their origin as mysterious as their sudden disappearance. It is hoped current diggings will soon supply the answer.

To bypass private property, turn east at the fork marked Blue Mountain Road, search through trash dumps for purple glass (a woman found a decanter only slightly damaged the day we were there) and drive on into the vicinity where Josie Morris lived. Local residents tell many tales of Josie and her sister, Ann Bassett, colorful Western women of cattle rustling days when the Butch Cassidy, "Mexican" Joe Herrera, and Tip Gault's gangs roamed the area of Brown's Park, but my favorite story came from Josie's son, Crawford McKnight. Josie died just last April, well in her 90s, but only a couple of years ago, she bagged a deer and complained to Crawford, "Son, I'm not the man I used to be; couldn't lift the carcass onto my horse, so had to quarter it to pack it home."

Although the roads in the Cub Creek area are generally accessible to passenger cars, sudden rain storms can turn the clay to washouts so the park rangers urge all explorers to take water, extra gas, a shovel and tire chains and advise checking with the ranger station first. Plans for new roads are in the making.

Campers in the Dinosaur National Monument will find primitive areas as well as established picnic spots on the road that winds in and out of Utah and Colorado on the way to Harper's Corner. On the 21-mile

drive from Monument Headquarters at Artesia, Colorado, several lookouts make for good viewing, climaxing at the Harper's Corner Point, itself, where, after a mile hike among twisted juniper, pinyon, and Douglas fir, you can see Whirlpool Canyon of the Green River on one side and Echo Park where the Yampa meets the Green at Steamboat Rock, on the other. Also evident is the Mitten Park Fault where vertical striations contrast with parallel lines of river-carved canyons. A river campsite and dirt roads can be spotted in Echo Park and those interested in noodling through the valley might come upon Pat's Holes, a cave where hermit Pat Lynch lived and where his own petroglyph of a sailing ship and personal brand remains with his untouched cot and clothes. Perhaps one of the original conservationists, Pat tacked a scrap of paper in his cavern reading:

"If in those caverns you shelter take  
Plaise do to them no harm  
Lave everything you find around  
Hanging up or on the ground."

Travelers with 4-wheel drive vehicles will make many discoveries in Echo Park.

A land of contrasts, Vernal offers still another trip in the Red Cloud Loop. Starting at Dry Fork Canyon, first stop is nearby Merkeley Park where, high on a cliff of Navajo



sandstone, an American flag with the legends "Pearl Harbor" and "Remember the Maine" are painted. It's said that two artists picketed ropes on a ledge and daubed their paints as they swung back and forth. More primitive decor may be seen on the petroglyph cliffs. Local residents will tell you where to look and one farm even advertises its archeological attractions, charging \$1 admission.

We were fortunate to drive the Loop with Dr. J. LeRoy Kay, retired vertebrate paleontologist of the Carnegie Museum. "Pop" Kay told us of Brush Creek Cave's stalagmites and stalactites, of the huge areas of sand asphalt, oil shales, and phosphate beds around Vernal, but, most fascinating, of the abundance of fossils, shells, and fossilized plantlife to be discovered. He termed Vernal a geologist's paradise with almost every land formation represented in a cross-section, almost lined in a row. "Because of so many formations, there is more chance of amateurs finding a variety of fossils in the Uintah Basin than anyplace known," he said. We can't wait to join him with a pick and when we assured him DESERT readers realize it's a federal offence to collect on Monument grounds and would donate anything unusual discovered elsewhere to a museum, he offered information on locations to visiting collectors. Just ask anyone for "Pop" Kay.

Rounding the Loop, he took us to a spot (off the Monument) where we picked up dinosaur bones from the ground and he told us that gastroliths, bones, petrified wood, and fossilized jelly-fish may be found in Steinaker Draw.

Split Mountain Gorge appears as a rugged white scar on the face of the mountains northeast of Vernal and, thanks again to the Park Service, we were treated to a run through its rapids. Putting in at Island Park boat campsite, we experienced an hour and a half of thrills, spinning through rapids, around boulders, coasting through halls of sandstone castles and rock walls honeycombed with mud-daubed nests. Sandy beaches feathered with tamarack were tucked among the rocks and, from the river, we spotted hikers on narrow trails and deer scampering for shelter.

A glimpse of the *Diplodocus* replica before the Field House of Natural History in downtown Vernal is sure to spur your visit to the Dinosaur Quarry in Dinosaur National Monument, where you'll discover Vernal's obvious attractions are as delightful as the remote. Camera in

Vernal area is rich with prehistoric Indian petroglyphs.



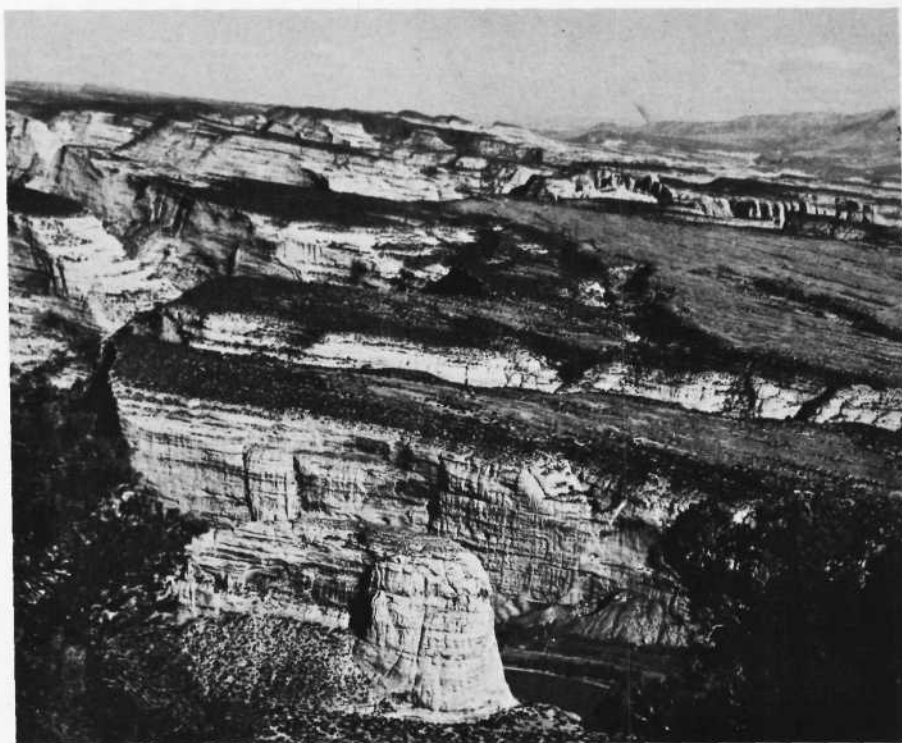
hand, we scaled narrow steps cut into the cliff where workers chipped meticulously to reveal prehistoric bones buried in layers of Morrison Formation of the Jurassic Age which form the Visitor Center's north wall. With jackhammer, chisel, and pick, "in-place" relieving operations reveal exhibits never viewed by human eyes, preservatives of synthetic resin are painted on the displays, and unnecessary fragments are removed for repair and shipment to other museums. Since their discovery in 1909, 26 nearly complete skeletons and many partial ones have been removed with complete assemblies on view at museums in Pittsburgh, Washington,

D.C., Lincoln, Denver, Salt Lake City, and Toronto.

Dutch John, the old prospector and mustanger, fared poorly in his shack not far from the Green River (now swollen by Flaming Gorge Dam), but he was one of the first to admire the balanced rocks tipped with eagle's nests, sheer canyon walls, and the crimson geode-sweep of Flaming Gorge. From Antelope Flat, rimmed with dun-colored shelves of sandstone and striated tilts of red and white emerging from the water like sunken ships, to Red Canyon, where the river plunges more than 1500 feet, boating campgrounds are available, water sports and fishing are excellent, and the scenery spectacular. Projected plans call for additional access roads, motels, marinas, and even a residential area with golf course and riding stables available to tourists. For those who shun the water, interesting trips may be made by land. A "Drive Through the Ages" in the Sheep Creek geological area features the Uintah Crest Fault, a cave, and fossilized trilobites, marine crustaceans, gastropods, brachiopods, corals, sponges, and sea urchins; dirt roads make view points accessible in many places and there is even a high standard trail in the Hideout Area for trail bikes.

So, whatever your pleasure, boats, rafts, burritos, 4-wheel drive, or passenger car, stop the clock when you get to Vernal . . . you'll be glad you did!

///



Some of Utah's most primitive country surrounds Flaming Gorge Dam.

**Every vacation is a better vacation  
if an adventure is involved.**

**Here's an idea to keep a family  
looking, searching and learning  
for as long as a vacation can last.**

## Open Season on Arches

by Stephen Jett

**C**ELEBRATED FOR its Rainbow Bridge arch, the Navajo country of Monument Valley is endowed with a number of lesser known—some almost unknown—arches equally impressive. Scouting for these is an exciting vacation project, and it isn't impossible that you may turn up a new one. Only a year ago Jim Hunt, veteran Monument Valley guide and owner of the San Juan Trading Post at Mexican Hat, discovered exotic Skeleton Arch where, reigning above a swirling three-tiered series of sandstone cavitites, its weird setting shivers the imagination with visions of a ghostly ballet. This location is known only to Jim Hunt, but it's well worth taking his tour to see it.

Some, like famous Window Rock at the Navajo capital, or Black Rock Natural Bridge with its 70-foot span only 10 feet above a stream, are readily accessible with signs pointing the way, but a great number of relatively unknown arches are difficult to get to or away from main roads.

One such area is in the beautiful Red Rock country in extreme north-eastern Arizona between Chuska and Carrizo ranges. The eastern part of Red Rock Valley contains at least five natural arches. One resembles an elephant; another is a mere slit in a tall, thin sandstone slab. But the most magnificent of all is 301-foot high Royal Arch near Cove. Though described by Van Falkenburgh in *DESERT* (Aug. '41) this arch remains virtually unvisited. It's distantly visible from Navajo Route 33, but to reach the arch you must travel a wagon road and then hike. Or, the arch may be viewed to advantage from the rim of Cove Mesa, reached by a jeep trail. Tall and pointed, in Gothic fashion, it's cut through a spur of red Wingate sandstone.

On the east side of Red Rock country lies Haspidibito Valley. This spectacular area of buttes, mesas, and other attractions will no doubt some day be one of Navajoland's most famous scenic spots. At present, however, its inaccessibility keeps it al-

most unknown to the outside world. High on the wall of one of the canyons entering this valley is a huge opening with a span that abuts a massive *contresort*, like a cathedral's flying buttress.

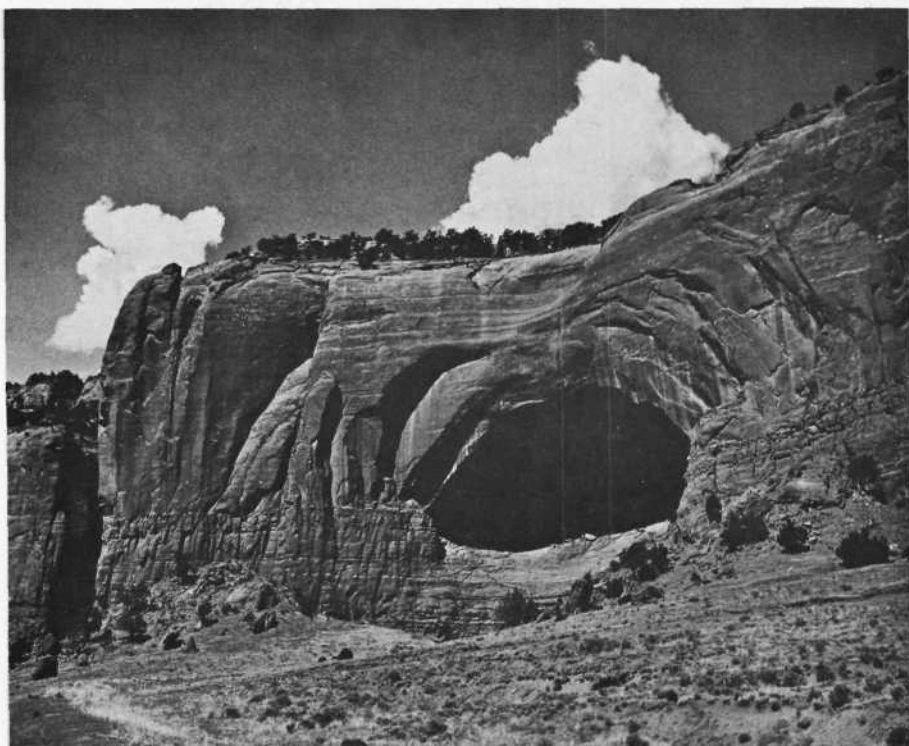
Few motorists on Navajoland's newly completed north-south paved highway connecting Route 3 (Arizona 264) and Route 1 (Arizona 64) realize that they pass within a few miles of many interesting natural arches. The traveler leaving Canyon de Chelly National Monument (which contains three natural windows) on his way to Monument Valley passes a primitive road four miles north of Chinle junction. Five miles to the west along this road is a fascinating little area with several small, but interesting, canyons, a monolith known as Edna's Needle, and two arches, one of which is one of the Navajo Country's most beautiful. Called Hope Arch, this delicate masterpiece of sculpture is an inver-

ted tear drop opening in a thin fin of red sandstone.

A mile south of Many Farms, a dirt road (Navajo Route 18) heads west toward Rough Rock. Before it mounts a mesa, a wagon road leaves it and ascends the shallow canyon of Black Mountain Wash. Even from Route 18, one of two arches in this locality is visible. Pierced through an outlying knob of red rock, this natural window is actually a double opening, with a partition of stone separating the two parts. Across the wash, against a cliff, is a second arch, shaped like a full moon.

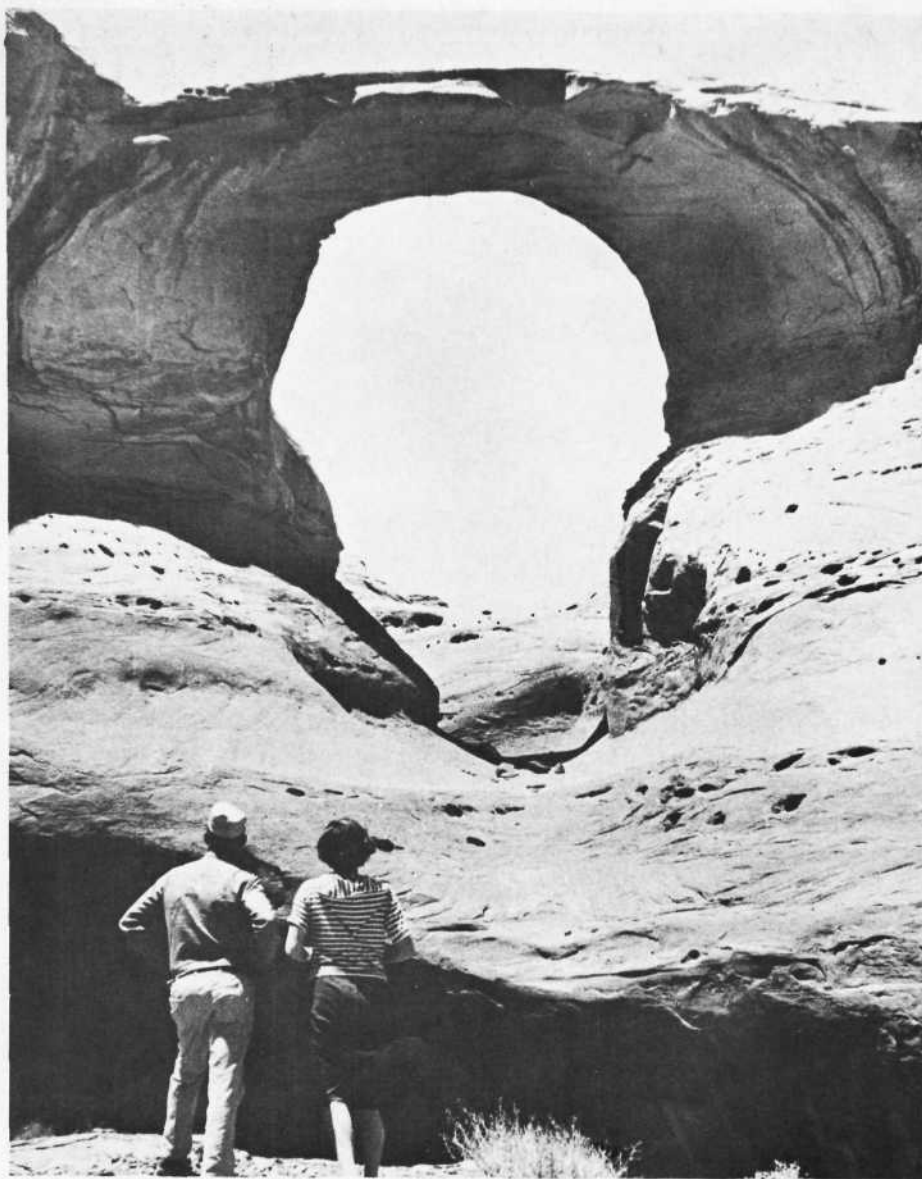
Continuing north to the junction of Navajo Routes 8 and 17, a short drive along dirt Route 8 brings you to the red-orange cliffs of Carson Mesa. Very near the road, to the north, is an arch. If the light is right, you can see two other arches in the cliffs.

Passing Round Rock near Route



*Carved into the side of a mesa, this arch is unknown to motorists traveling over its top. If you make a project of it, you might discover an arch yourself!*





*Skeleton Arch, rising beside a three-tiered sandstone ballroom, was discovered by Jim Hunt in 1964.*

17, there is not only Cathedral Butte in its setting of vivid clays, but also a nice natural arch in one of the spired spurs of the butte. Then, between Round Rock and Rock Point, the highway skirts an attractive mesa of Wingate sandstone where an arch is visible in one of the mesa's indentations.

In addition to the belt of arches extending from Chinle to the Carrizo Mountains, another area of the Navajo Reservation is rich in natural arches. Whereas most of those described above are cut in Wingate sandstone, the arches in this second area are primarily of lighter orange Navajo sandstone. The center of this area is the vast slickrock wilderness of the Rainbow Plateau, extending along Lake Powell from Navajo Canyon to Paiute Canyon.

The "granddaddy" of all arches, 309-foot Rainbow Natural Bridge, is found in the midst of the magnificent

features of this area. But if Rainbow is the granddaddy, it is not without grandchildren, for a number of other arches perforate the otherworldly landscape.

Northeast of Navajo Mountain is Hawkeye Arch, once described in *DESERT* (October, 1951) By Barry Goldwater. This great arch, formed by a collapse of a cave roof, is estimated to be 200 feet high and 250 feet long. On the northwest slope of Navajo Mountain, in Zane Grey's Surprise Valley area, is Owl Arch.

Another small arch, formed, like Hawkeye, from the collapse of a cave, is on the side of a sandstone "beehive" south of Navajo Mountain. This arch was apparently unknown to non-Indians until the spring of 1963, when it was discovered by a party consisting of the Harold Quicks of Flagstaff, and myself. As testimony to the fact that this arch had long lain unvisited, several potsherds and a perfect little

white arrowhead were found in the cave behind the arch. Myles Headrick, the trader at nearby Rainbow Lodge, was unaware of its existence, as were the pilots of Page who point out arches on their scenic flights over the area. I have therefore named it "Quick Arch" for Harold Quick, who first spotted it.

A few miles away is Arch in the Sky, punched in the side of a huge vaulted alcove in a butte outlying the southern tip of Cummings Mesa. Another arch lies to the west, in one of the rounded masses of Entrada sandstone which I have called the Dominguez Buttes after Atanasio Dominguez of the 1776 Dominguez-Escalante expedition.

There are at least two arches in the Navajo Canyon system. One is near the mouth of Jay-i Canyon. The other, though unknown to the nearest trader or to the Page pilots, is visible from the trail to Inscription House ruin in Navajo National Monument. It is formed from the remnants of a partially collapsed alcove roof high on the north side of Jones Canyon.

In addition to the many above-mentioned arches, there is an arch near the rim of Keet Seel Canyon which visitors to the great Keet Seel ruin seldom see. And, hidden in the fastness of White Mesa, are three other arches. One of these, White Mesa Arch, buttresses the south side of the mesa and is actually visible from Navajo Route 1 (Arizona 64), though it is somewhat difficult to actually reach the arch. Two other arches are found near the rims of the canyon which has carved the mesa into the shape of a horseshoe. One of these is probably the arch once called White Craig Arch, after a prospector killed in the area. One has also been named Margaret Arch by Barry Goldwater.

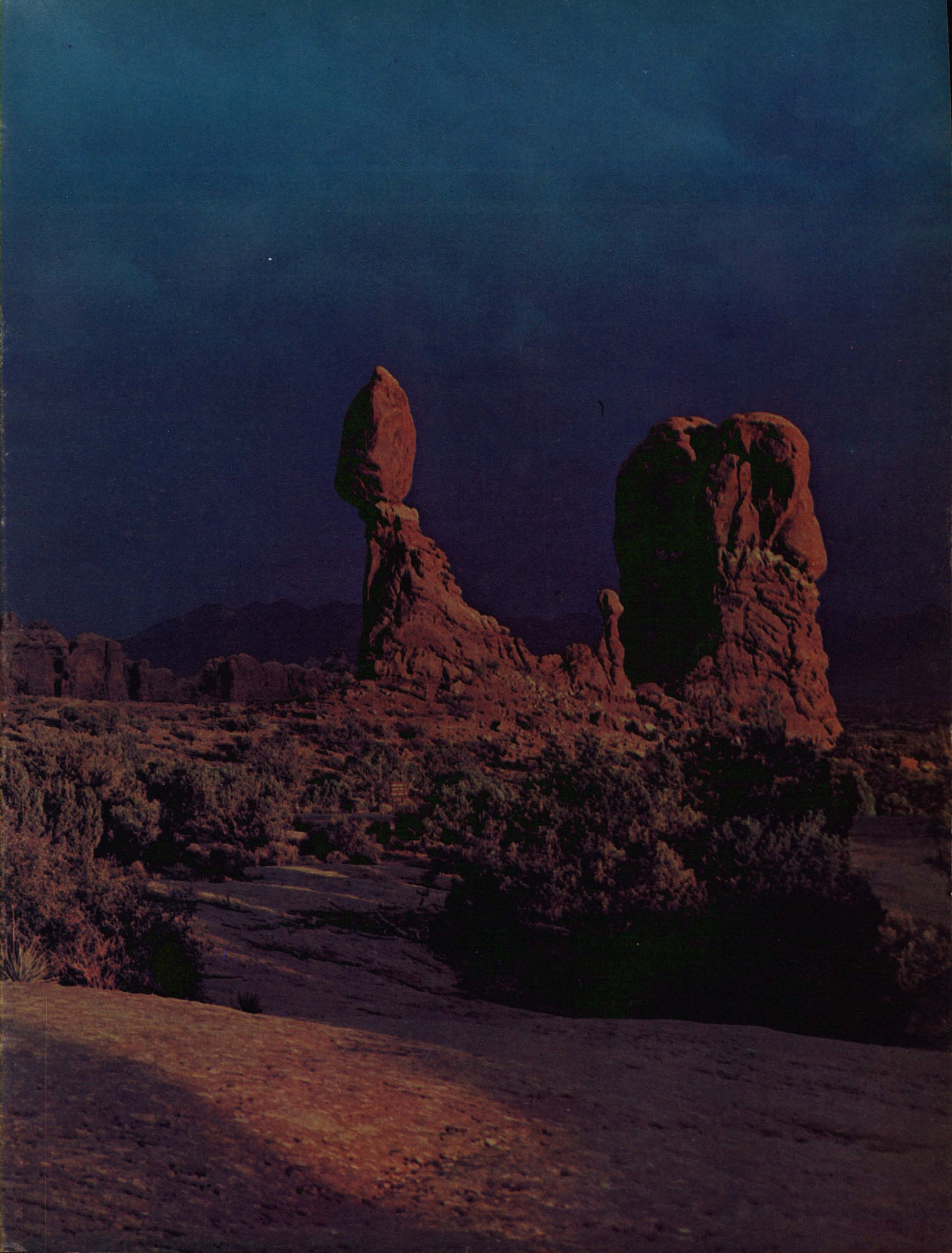
There are, indeed, many marvelous corners of the Navajo Country still unknown even to the old hands in the area, and many arches described above are only examples of what awaits the real explorer in this, one of the nation's unique scenic lands.

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# TRIBAL PARK IN NAVAJOLAND

by Randall Henderson

**R**ECENTLY IT WAS my privilege to return again to what I regard as the most spectacular scenic area in all the West. This is Monument Valley, in the Navajo Indian reservation astride the Arizona-Utah border.

Charles Kelly first wrote about this fantastic region for readers of *DESERT Magazine* in July, 1938. He referred to the valley as "The Graveyard of the Gods." It is an apt description. Giant monoliths of sandstone and limestone rise hundreds of feet above the floor of the desert and are silhouetted against a seldom-clouded sky in all directions as far as the eye can reach. Many of them have been given names descriptive of their profiles, or in memory of men, both Indian and white, who traversed this area in past generations. There are Gray Whiskers Butte, Elephant Butte, Totem Pole, Thunderbird Mesa, Three Sisters, Camel Butte, Artist's Point and scores of others.

Dramatic changes have taken place in this remote area during the last five years—not in the geography of the terrain, but in accessibility to the region and accommodations for motoring visitors.

Today modern motel accommodations with dining rooms and trading posts are available at Gouldings in Monument Valley and at adjacent Mexican Hat and Bluff, Utah for the increasing number of motorists who have come this way since Navajo Route 18 provided paved access from Kayenta, Arizona, to the south, and Blanding, Utah, to the north. The highway crosses the San Juan River at Mexican Hat.

Those who ventured early into this land of giant tombstones dreamed that someday it would become a national park. And now the dream has come true. In the '50s when negotiations failed to induce the National Park Service to acquire the land on terms acceptable to the Indians, a

far-sighted and highly efficient Tribal Council at Window Rock, the reservation capital, took the initiative and created the park as a tribal enterprise.

A fine Visitors' Center and Observatory constructed of native stone by skilled Indian craftsmen was dedicated in 1960, and last year visiting motorists averaged 3300 a month. The Center includes a crafts shop where Indian handiwork in silver and turquoise, wool blankets dyed with vegetable colors, leather and dolls is on display and for sale.

The 96,000 acre Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park is, in fact, a new national park for all Americans. A modest fee collected at the Visitors' Center is applied toward the maintenance of the park. Uniformed Indian rangers patrol the area to keep it free from litter and to provide information and other services for all who come.

Raymond Ashley, the good looking and very courteous ranger on duty the day we were there, had served a hitch in the armed forces and attended both the University of Arizona and the University of Utah. He told us about the plans of the Navajo Tribal Council for an ambitious program of public parks which the Indians are developing for many of the interesting sites on their huge reservation. When completed these are to include tribal parks at Tsegi Canyon, Anasazi Prehistoric Ruins, The Dinosaur Tracks, Kit Carson Cave, Coal Canyon and the Four Corners. The tribe, by ordinance, has established a Navajo Tribal Park Commission with Sam Day, a well-educated and highly competent member of the tribe as chairman.

A penthouse and promenade atop the Observatory provides a grandstand observation point from which



*No pants for these gals! Whether herding sheep or keeping house, Navajo women wear colorful satin skirts with velvet blouses. Their turquoise jewelry is their mark of wealth.*





*Mud-covered hogan is traditional abode of Monument Valley Navajos.*

visitors can view the vast panorama of pinnacles, spires, embattlements, and domes which extend in all directions. To the east are The Mittens, resembling a pair of gigantic hand-warmers. To the north is Sentinel Mesa and to the southwest, Gray Whiskers Butte. Looking to the southeast the most conspicuous monuments are Mitchell and Merrick Buttes, named for two white prospectors who met violent deaths near their bases. Here is the story:

One of the historic legends of Monument Valley relates to a mythical silver mine located somewhere in this region. The ore was said to be so pure that past generations of tribesmen mined it and used it to mold bullets for their guns. Many years ago two prospectors came onto the reservation from Colorado with burros and packs to make an exhaustive search for the lost silver mine. The Indians resented their intrusion, but offered no resistance until several weeks later when word was circulated through the Navajo underground that the men had found the silver and were leaving with their burros laden with rich ore. As the intruders camped one night at the base of what is now Mitchell Butte, the prospectors were attacked by tribesmen and Mitchell was killed. Merrick escaped, but was tracked by the assailants and a few hours later met his death at the hands of tribesmen at the base of what is now Merrick Butte. But there is an Indian version of this episode. The Navajos have a deep reverence for the natural world—for the earth and its wildlife. They attacked the prospectors, not because they had been stealing ore that belonged to the Indians, but because they had been guilty of desecrating the body of Mother Earth. They are a deeply religious people. At least this is true of the older generation—the "Long Hairs" as they are known.

There is a public campground with

ramadas and tables for picnicking parties near the Visitors' Center. From this point graded dirt roads lead off into a maze of monoliths. Maps furnished by the rangers indicate the roads which may be safely traveled, and list the place names of monuments seen along the way. Drivers are warned to stay on the established trails. The off-road sand may be treacherous. Guided tours in 4-wheel drive vehicles equipped for the terrain of this region are available at Gouldings, the San Juan Trading Post in Mexican Hat, and at Recapture Court in Bluff—or scheduled trips through the entire Canyonlands with the above tour included may be taken with the comfort and guidance of a Grayline Tour starting from Salt Lake City.

The printed guide folder given to visitors include instructions similar to those appearing in guide books of National Parks. The following items are especially pertinent:

"Please do not enter the hogans—Navajo dwellings—without a proper interpreter and guide, who will first obtain permission. Watch your camera manners. Do not photograph Navajos without their permission. A small gratuity is usually expected."

The Monument Valley park differs from the nation's national parks in one important respect. It is a living museum of primitive life. Twenty-five Indian families occupy their hogans within the park boundaries. They graze their sheep on the desert landscape and pursue their domestic life as their ancestors have done for many generations. They prepare their fried bread and barbecued mutton on open fires outside the hogan, or on the floor inside during rare periods when there are storms. Often the women may be seen weaving their colorful blankets on a loom set up under a juniper tree. In accordance with their religion, the medicine men conduct sings on occasion. Visitors may witness these ceremonies, but it is recommended that this be done only in company with a guide who speaks the language, for there are certain courtesies due the Indians on such occasions just as is true in any Protestant, Catholic or Jewish church.

Monument Valley is high desert, never excessively hot in summer, and seldom stormy in the winter. Colorful people and sky-piercing pinnacles of this land make it unique among American parks. Each year it grows more popular, but it's still one of the most dramatically isolated regions of the far West. ///



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# A Place to Dream

by Mabel L. Anderson



**T**HE ONLY NEED for a clock at Fish Lake is to awaken fishermen at dawn. In Kit Carson's day this wasn't necessary. Trout crowded the clear water in such abundance his men simply killed them with sticks. Such wholesale slaughter isn't possible today, but the fishin's still mighty good.

There's a lot more than rainbow trout and 40-pound mackinaw to entice you to this lofty plateau land in southern Utah, however. There's majestic Cathedral Valley (DESERT, April '63) a short distance away, Capitol Reef National Monument with its famous Sleeping Rainbow guest ranch to the east or, close to the south, Escalante River that passes through some of America's most primitive land. (DESERT, Apr. '64).

But Fish Lake itself is worthy of a visit. Lt. Brewerton, traveling with Kit Carson about the middle of the 19th century, wrote of "camping one evening upon a beautiful little lake situated in a hollow among mountains, but at so great an elevation that even in summer it was surrounded by snow and partially covered with ice." He said they met friendly Utes who brought fish caught in willowbaskets (weirs) laid in little streams that fed the lake.

Later, Mormon pioneers discovered the valley and, among its picturesque lava boulders, built log cabins that

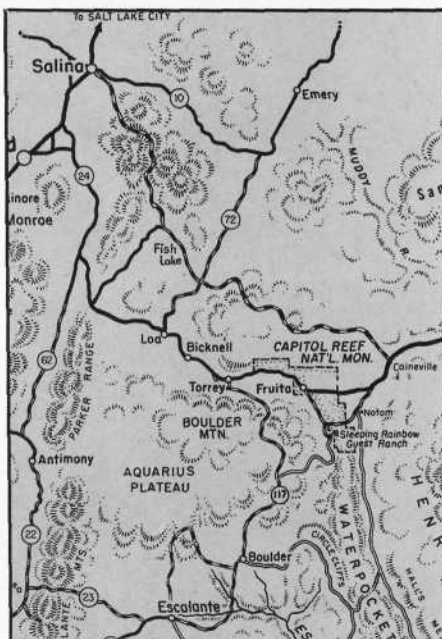
are still in use today. My husband's grandfather was one of these. Told by his doctor to spend some time in high country, he came to Fish Lake more than 80 years ago. Traveling by wagon and team, it took him three days to traverse a route we now cover in two hours. Upon arriving, he stayed in a cowboy's cabin and was astonished when the cattleman slept with his clothes on and used his saddle for a pillow.

But life was serene and his health improved. Soon his son joined him

and they gathered watercress, made their own bread in iron skillets and shot jackrabbits and doves to supplement their fish diet. Sometimes they traded tobacco and calico to the Indians in exchange for fish, which they salted down in 40-gallon water barrels and took back to town to sell. About the turn of the century, he arrived for another vacation and built the cabin that has served his heirs as a honeymoon and vacation retreat for four generations. In fact, for a newcomer to the family to suggest a honeymoon elsewhere is tantamount to heresy.

In early June, cabins around the lake are still partially buried in snow and blocks of ice float across the water. The air is crisp and tangy and it's then a booming fire on the cabin's hearth draws you down to a soft bear rug spread on the floor. A popcorn basket is shuttled through an iron ring over the fire and, while cold winds howl outside, the cabin's log wall inside resound with crackles, rustles and cozy warm sounds.

By August, when summer is in full force, it's still pleasantly cool. People come from great distances to escape clock-ridden rounds and debilitating heat. Here in the forests or on the 6-mile long lake they camp, boat, fish, water ski, hike or loaf at one of the area's three resorts. This is a place to contemplate, to write, read, dream





or just listen to stillness. Here are found those moments of detachment that encourage you to reassess values and achieve a fresh perspective.

But all is not contemplative at Fish Lake. Mushrooms and berries lure you along forest paths fragrant with wild roses. Strings of fish swing across cabin porches like Monday's wash. Smooth pebbles skip over blue water where squealing children dabble their feet. Untrammelled lands await across the lake where forests cling to mountain walls. You can anchor your boat and pull yourself up the steep cliffs by grasping roots that jut like handles from the brown lava earth.

Usually the air is filled with sunshine, but sometimes a mist arises from the lake to wreath the hills in mystery. Storm clouds mass low and you hurry inside to escape a sudden downpour. But afterwards it's sheer joy to step out into freshly washed air spiced with aspen, pine, and pungent stumps of rotting trees. At night, after a storm, you feel an intimacy in the stars that hang in the large, dark sky.

And always there is the rainbow trout for dinner, dipped in cornmeal, butter, and then fried on a heavy



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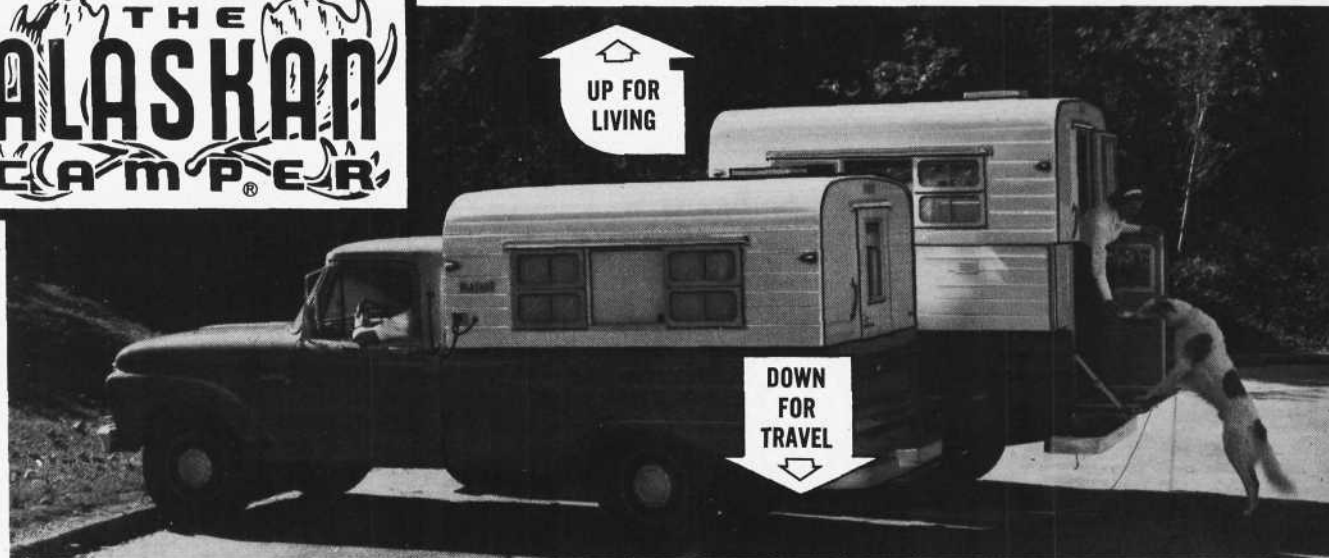
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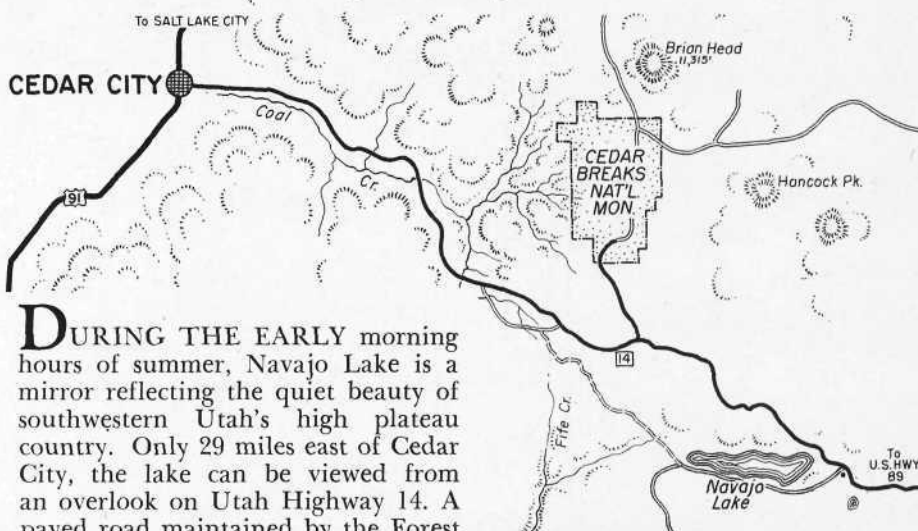
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# SKI, FISH or CAMP AT UTAH'S ALL-SEASON RESORT by frank jensen



**D**URING THE EARLY morning  
 hours of summer, Navajo Lake is a  
 mirror reflecting the quiet beauty of  
 southwestern Utah's high plateau  
 country. Only 29 miles east of Cedar  
 City, the lake can be viewed from  
 an overlook on Utah Highway 14. A  
 paved road maintained by the Forest  
 Service (Navajo Lake is part of the  
 Dixie National Forest) also skirts its  
 southern edge, giving access to boat  
 docks, campgrounds and a lodge.

Navajo Lake has not always been  
 this accessible, nor this calm. Eighty  
 years ago a band of Navajos raided  
 the Mormon settlement of Kanarra-  
 ville and drove their cattle contra-  
 band along canyons and ridges to the  
 top of the 10,000-foot Markagunt  
 Plateau to a hidden lake. Having  
 given no thought to pursuit, they  
 were surprised when a posse arrived  
 to recover the stolen horses. The In-  
 dians left one thing behind, though—  
 the name by which the lake has been  
 known ever since.

Perhaps 1000 years ago, maybe  
 10,000, a molten mass of volcanic  
 lava rumbled from fissures within  
 the earth and dammed the small  
 valley, creating a lake.

A few miles beyond the overlook  
 on Utah 14, the highway surmounts  
 the summit and drops into Midway  
 Valley, an open meadow surrounded  
 by low, rolling hills of virgin forest.



*A Bristlecone forest lies on a wind-  
 swept ridge north of Cedar Breaks  
 National Monument. Although not  
 as old as those in California, these  
 are 1800 to 2000 years old. Their rug-  
 ged character in the spectacular set-  
 ting makes this a unique scenic and  
 botanical area.*

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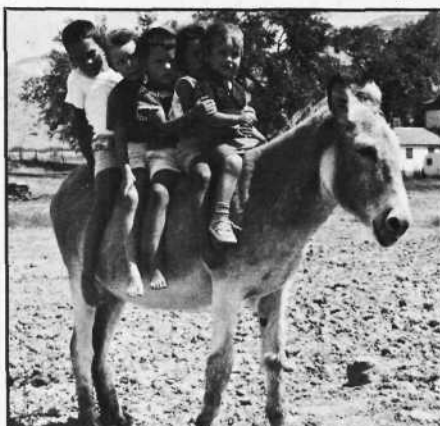
Another road, Utah 143, joins Utah  
14 in Midway Valley and leads di-  
rectly to Cedar Breaks National  
Monument. This spot is definitely  
worth visiting. A small-scale Bryce  
Canyon, its eroded amphitheatre is  
2000 feet deep and nine miles wide.  
It lies in the Wasatch Formation and  
is noted for the variety and intensi-  
ty of its 47 different hues. The Na-  
tional Park Service has spent a quar-  
ter of a million dollars since 1959 de-  
veloping roads, overlooks and camp-  
grounds at Cedar Breaks.

Just north of it, Brian Head Peak,  
an 11,135-foot volcanic knoll lifts its  
wind-swept face above surrounding  
highlands. The highest point in  
southwestern Utah, it is accessible by  
passenger car. From a shelter on top  
a vast view of both the high plateaus  
and the desert country beyond is  
visible. Directly below you see Bear  
Flat, an elongated valley where a ski  
complex is being built. The resort,  
which takes its name from nearby  
Brian Head Peak, will include a 3,000-  
foot long chair lift and T-bar.

Although the Brian Head Ski area  
is the newest resort development on  
the Markagunt Plateau, it is not the  
only one in the area. Six miles west  
of Navajo Lake an improved road  
leads past North Fork Guest Ranch  
where lodgings and horses are avail-  
able and the hunting season opens  
in October. The ranch, an old home-

stead dating back to the 1880s, is  
operated by Burt and Idona Smith.  
Cabins and boats may be rented also  
at Navajo Lake Lodge, located at the  
west end of the lake. This resort is  
operated by Hugh Widner and Gun-  
ner Ojanpera and has a rustic atmos-  
phere suited to either the fisherman  
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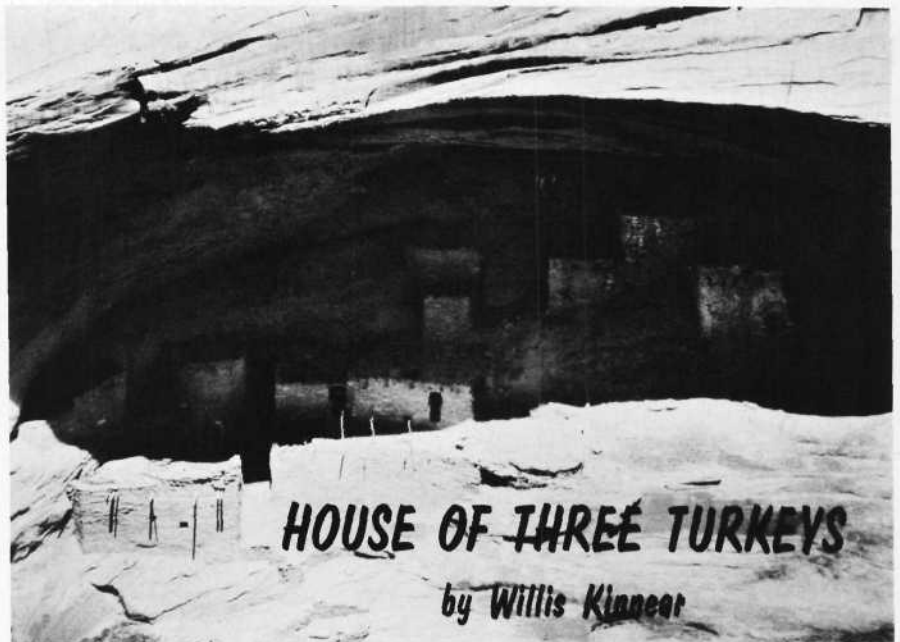
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## HOUSE OF THREE TURKEYS

by Willis Kinnear

**T**HE MAP has been changed.

The Ranger's pencil traced Rim Drive along the south edge of northern Arizona's Canyon de Chelly National Monument. His pencil hesitated to indicate the turn to the overlook for famed Spider Rock, rising 800 feet above the canyon floor, then continued along dotted lines where the improved road had been recently extended. We could now visit Three Turkey Ruin!

These ruins are not a part of the National Monument, but are on the Navajo Reservation and are a Navajo Tribal Park. To reach them, drive five miles beyond the road to Spider Rock overlook and watch for a sign indicating a turn. The sign might not be there, as Indians have a habit of making personal use of any piece of wood available, but if you make the correct turn and continue for another three miles to another sign, turn again, then you are on your way to the ruins. The road may be traveled in a passenger car, but 4-wheel drive is recommended.

If you are lucky enough to get there—and more explicit directions are useless, as every storm changes the route—you will wind up at the rim of Three Turkey Canyon beside one of the campgrounds Navajos are placing all about their reservation.

The Canyon's opposite wall is a dark ruddy color, its top studded with trees. The cave with the ruin is rather small and hard to spot.

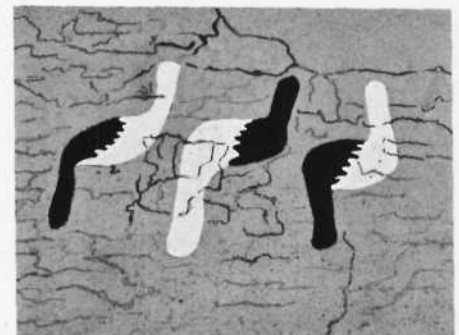
Our own reaction left us speechless. We have seen most of the famous ruins—the largest, the smallest, and the most isolated. But this one is different. It appears almost perfect, as

though the Indians had moved out yesterday. But yesterday was 700 years ago!

Here indeed is the jewel of all the ruins of the Southwest. No reconstruction, no tourist trails winding through it; just a small group of finely constructed and preserved rooms sitting quietly in a sheltered cave in the noonday sun.

But the three turkeys, where were they? We focused our binoculars on to the wall of a room 700 feet across the canyon and there they were—three of them, painted white and reddish brown on an adobe-plastered wall.

There seems to be some question



Three Turkey drawing by author.

as to whether or not these figures are turkeys, however. In 1939, when Dr. Harold S. Colton led an expedition to the ruins and was disappointed to discover two others had preceded him by 40 years and left their names on the wall, he labelled the figures turkeys, although a Navajo in the party believed them to be gourds. Later, a Hopi saw a photo-



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graph and said they looked like clasped hands.

The reason visitors today see "turkeys" is probably due to numerous well-defined cracks on the wall which conform to bills and feet. Nevertheless, turkeys were plentiful in those days, judging from stone pens in Southwest ruins which are presumed to have held turkeys.

Aside from the question as to when is a turkey a turkey, Dr. Colton found 18 rooms and a kiva with interior walls painted white. To date the small community is as well protected from marauding tourists as it once was from hostile neighbors, because of its inaccessibility. Visitors must content themselves with a long distance view of the dwellings snugly tucked into a small cave high above the canyon floor. Roofs and ladders extending from them are still intact, which alone renders them unique among ruins.

The only thing that appears unreal is the lack of activity. Feet no longer climb the two sets of stone stairways leading from one level to another. No more metates on the roofs hold kernels of corn. The large kiva entrance, flanked with broad slabs of stone, goes untredd. It has been a long 700-year siesta for the House of Three Turkeys. It is sad to know the Pueblo Indians who built it will never again return.

///

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## SEGO, UTAH

BY LAMBERT FLORIN

A monthly feature by the author of *Ghost Town Album*, *Ghost Town Trails*, *Western Ghost Towns* and *Western Ghost Town Shadows*

**T**HOMPSON, AT FIRST called Thompson's Springs, was settled very early because of its generous supply of water, a rarity in that part of Utah. Halfway between Green and Colorado Rivers, the area is made up of sandy wastes alternated with spectacular red rock formations.

Nothing much happened at Thompson until the arrival in 1893 of Harry Ballard, a native of England. A man of wider horizons than his easily satisfied neighbors, he soon acquired a spread of cattle and sheep. He loved to roam the surrounding country and, on a jaunt up a canyon, he came upon an outcropping of coal. Quietly, he bought the adjacent land and started mining.

About 1909 Ballard sold out to B. F. Bauer, owner of the Salt Lake Hardware, who formed a corporation and sold \$1,000,000 worth of stock. The group was named the American Fuel Company and the camp was named Neslin after its general manager.

The newly organized company started out on an ambitious scale. A road was constructed which re-

quired 13 bridges, as the route crossed and recrossed the stream. Included among other structures at the camp was a tippie and the first coal washer west of the Mississippi. Operations began in 1911, but five years later Bauer fired his erstwhile friend Neslin, and named a Mr. Van Dirk as general manager, at the same time changing the name of the mine to Chesterfield Coal Co., and the name of the camp to Sego.

Walter Ronzio, now of Grand Junction, Colorado, was nine years old when he first saw the canyon below the coal mines. In 1913 he, his father, mother and brother homesteaded about a mile below the mine. The father went to work for the Chesterfield Company and when Walter was 14 he also worked in the mine. He remembers looking forward to his first payday. "The company was having financial troubles," he recalls, "and when they got behind they announced they'd pay off a few weeks of the several months they owed in wages. The men lined up at the pay window, but after about half the line had been paid, the clerk said, 'Sorry, boys, that's all there is.'

Seemed as though I was always left out.

During one optimistic period the Denver and Rio Grande RR built a spur line to the camp, calling it the Ballard and Thompson. During another good spell the company spent \$100,000 to bring a 44,000-volt power line from Columbia, Utah, their own Lance engines having worn out. But hard times came more frequently than good. In order to get a firm promise of power from Columbia, the firm had guaranteed a 20-year operation. The first power arrived in camp November 21, 1927. Exactly 20 years later to the day, the company announced closure of the mines.

From a high of 125 men employed at Sego, the total by now had dwindled to 27. Among these was Walter Ronzio who spearheaded a group organized to buy and operate the camp and mines. Each man put up as much cash as possible, promising to pay the balance out of future pay. When the mine was put up for auction at Moab, employees bought it for \$30,010, the previous high bid being an even \$30,000.

The new company, under the name of Utah Grand Coal, started operations immediately and within a year had paid all outstanding obligations. But then, in Walter's words, "Things began to happen. Fire of undetermined origin destroyed our tippie. Then the railroad notified us that service to Sego would discontinue. This meant we would have to build a road, buy dump trucks and a boxcar loader. It required a five month closure, but we did it." The month they reopened, the repair shop burned to the ground. In spite of setbacks, however, Walter and his men kept the mine going until their best customer, the railroad, went from coal locomotives to diesel in 1953. That meant finis!

Walter Ronzio returns to the scene several times a year. "I stand there and look at those dead trees and ruined buildings and ask myself, 'Could this be the place where I lived and worked so many years?'" Our photo shows a rear view of the old company store at the left. At right is one of two "American" boarding houses in the segregated camp. Separate buildings sheltered Greeks, Japanese and Negroes. Trees have died due to lowering of the water table, and the 13 old bridges used by the railroad to cross the stream now span dry washes. A danger area surrounds the central vent caused by a fire in underground coal. Smoke, steam and hot ground signal the cautious to remain well away. ///



# DESERT DISPENSARY

by Sam Hicks

Part of a series of articles relating Sam Hicks' first-hand observations to the uses made by primitive peoples of nature's products.

**E**ACH SPINY, leafless Chia blossom contains a prodigious quantity of seeds. In early summer, after they have dried and the seeds are ready for harvest, the plant is picked and the ripened blossoms, usually six or eight to a plant, are crushed by hand. The seeds, one held in the tiny tubular base of each spine, are then shaken into a basket. They spill out freely—almost a half-teaspoon full to the blossom. Spines and bits from the crushed pods are later winnowed out by tossing the seeds in a light breeze.

Two distinct types of Chia grow



abundantly in the sand desert lands of the Southwest and Mexico after rainy seasons. To the layman the plants are identical, except one grows in miniature.

Ancient people of these arid regions depended heavily on Chia as a staple food and, in all probability, it was harvested and eaten by them before corn. It is still used regularly by the descendants of these people who first discovered its usefulness and, in just the last year, Chia has become available to the public in health food stores in Southern California.

Chia seeds from the miniature plants are used by primitive people more as an eye treatment than as a food. These tiny seeds may be ground on a metate into a meal and eaten, or soaked in liquid and drunk in exactly the same manner that the larger seeds from the taller, more robust plants are utilized. But, primarily because the yield is less, only a few small jars of the miniature Chia is harvested annually by local people, who sprinkle the fine seeds into their eyes at night to remove foreign particles from them and to soothe irritation.

Both varieties of ripe Chia seeds are hard and smooth, so long as they are dry. When placed in water, or any liquid for that matter, they soften and swell. The seeds, normally tan to black in color, change to a faint blue and increase their original size by four or five diameters. If plain water surrounds the Chia seeds, it turns to a clear gelatin and the entire tapioca-like substance is pleasant to eat, especially so if a little brown sugar is added.

With new modes of transportation now carrying great varieties of foods into far-flung regions of the Southwest, is it interesting to note that Chia is still being harvested and eaten by people whose forefathers depended upon it. Of these people I have asked the following questions: Is Chia gathered and eaten because of its nutrition and taste? Or, possibly, because it is free? Or is eating it simply a custom?

Answers vary from one family to another, but the real reason probably lies in a combination of all three.

///

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## CHIA

seed. Scouts, Historic, U.S. Army, Mission Fathers and Explorer's accounts, as far back as Pliny, at the dawn of Christianity, with M.D.s in botanic data and current habitues of the deserts, remark on Chia as an unusual energy sustaining cereal, while absorbing toxics and fatigue. Chia is found to be especially kind to the lower digestive system, and and agreeable to abused stomachs that no longer tolerate medicines, unnatural foods, some breads, or liquors. The humble Chia is the recently rediscovered survival and best vigor food of our noble, hale and tireless Indians. Spoonsful, whole as is, ground or soaked, more or less daily, demonstrates its salient attribute to stem the torrent of fatigue or exhaustion, and return to usefulness . . . often with day-long, long-winded energy. Chia is further known as a thirst assuager, alkali and other water conditioner, a real influence for body weight control, pacifying, calming, and makes easier rolling out of bed. Great in flapjacks and aroma in baking. "Beautifully clean" real genuine Chia. Trial 12 oz. \$2. Generous 2 1/2 lbs. \$5; 6 1/2 lbs. \$12; 12 lbs. \$21. Postpaid, with absorbing 10,000 word Chia Story. Story alone 50c. Basic recipes, cultivating data, and Pollen Story included. Also Seed grade uncleaned Chia, suitable for gardens, sprouting, or wonderful bird food . . . they will love you, and perk up. 10 lbs. \$5.; 100 lbs. \$30 F.O.B.

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# I FOUND PEGLEG'S BLACK GOLD

IT IS TIME once and for all to end the mystery, the speculation and the controversy. Almost 10 years ago I found what has been known since 1852 as the "burned black gold" the Pegleg.

Without pinpointing the spot on a map for reasons that are obvious, I will say only that it is less than 30 miles from Salton Sea within the confines of the map on page 10 of the November 1946 issue of DESERT Magazine.

always been doubting Thomases who claimed that lost mines and treasures of the desert were nothing but figments of somebody's imagination.

Now it is time to prove that a lost desert bonanza has been found—and not lost again, for good.

Let me qualify my statement. I have lived most of my life in the Southwest and have always been a desert man. I've been a subscriber to DESERT Magazine for many years and although I've not been reading it

let's go back to the beginning for a brief resume of the Pegleg story and Henry E. W. Wilson from his article "Pegleg Gold Is Not a Myth" in the November 1946 issue of DESERT Magazine:

In the year 1852, John O. Smith, known as Pegleg Smith, came from Yuma to Los Angeles by way of Warner's ranch, at a short-cut across the desert. He was familiar with this part of the Southwest, having been a horse



Photo of two-ounce black gold nugget exhibited on page of original article which appeared in DESERT Magazine March, 1965.

To our readers: In the March '65 issue of DESERT there was an article written by an anonymous author which related his experience in locating the lost Pegleg black gold, a once-proven bonanza that has eluded prospectors for over 100 years. The writer claimed to have marketed \$314,650 of these nuggets by removing the black covering and selling them in Alaska. He offered to answer questions printed on the Letters page in subsequent issues of DESERT. Enclosed with his manuscript were two nuggets, one black and the other with the black coating removed, now on display in the DESERT Magazine office.

As a result, hundreds of visitors have inspected the nuggets—some of them "believers," others "doubters." We have also received hundreds of letters. Some readers have offered to purchase the nuggets, many have requested contact with the writer, a few have been executives of mining companies (at least one with a Dun and Bradstreet rating) who are interested in launching a commercial operation and sharing proceeds with the writer. Most questions are repetitious—what kind of detector was used, requests for more explicit directions, etc. We at DESERT have been accused of perpetrating the article to increase circulation, to attract metal detector advertisers, or to sell books on lost mines. About the only thing we haven't been accused of is manufacturing the nuggets, although there are some who believe they have been cast.

We are truly elated with the excitement the article has created. Our publication welcomes reader participation and it is our mission to entice readers into the wholesome, healthy desert. Mr. Pegleg's (as we refer to him in our office) story has done just that. So far no one has come back with gold, but we believe that those who venture forth return with intangibles more precious than gold. We have been rewarded to see families join force in this hunt. And sure they buy books! They're learning about the desert, its lore, its geology, its wildlife, its history, and its plants. Their imaginations are stimulated while they practice self-sufficiency, survival methods, and observation. We think it's great. We commend Mr. Pegleg for the way he has handled this.

About the nuggets—they are on display at DESERT Magazine, and will continue to be (in spite of the fact I'd prefer to hang one on a chain around my neck). The first two weighed just under one ounce each; the third, which arrived with the following letter, is two ounces and a real dinger. Imagine finding the 14-ounce one!

We would like to make this clear to readers—we DO NOT know the identity of the man who found Pegleg's black gold. We are not selling gold nuggets, nor do we wish to be involved as brokers in fostering a mining enterprise. Mr. Pegleg has in no way attempted to place the responsibility for his claims on DESERT and we are not aware of his having taken advantage in any way of the attention his article has earned. We appreciate this. Anonymous situations are delicate at best, but in this we believe the author is justified. Since we can't find any motive for his revelation other than that which he stated, we hope his generosity is rewarded by the stimulation it has brought into the lives of DESERT readers.

Below is Mr. Pegleg's answer to letters printed in the April issue.

Choral Pepper, Editor

Dear Choral Pepper:

If my knowledge of human nature is any criterion, reactions to my story in the March issue about finding Pegleg's black gold have run the gamut from those who are searching for the black nuggets right now to

the contemptuous disbelief of "experts." Letters in reference to it and printed in the April issue are both interesting and intelligent.

Like a faithful wife, the desert has been kind to me and someday I would like to repay the debt. This is why

I answer Dr. Mounce of La Canada first: He makes an interesting point in his letter about using the gold to teach "Americanism." His point is well taken. I would reveal the exact location of the black gold today if there were some way to get an absolute guarantee that 100% of the proceeds would be spent in some worthy form of desert preservation or for something like the Doctor's Americanism project. But, I wouldn't want one red cent to be siphoned off in taxes or in any other way to feed a gang of welfare beatniks who have nothing better to do than sprawl their lazy carcasses in the doorways of public buildings, nor to support, feed and arm foreign beatniks who burn and defile the American flag!

One of my reasons for not revealing the location is in the faint hope that someday a way may be found to use the rest of the black gold for a worthy cause. (If anyone would care to understand me completely and my reasons, I would suggest they read Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*!)

In answer to Jack Pepper's letter about whether the location is within the circle of the map or in the Chocolate Mountains, let me say that I considered this when writing the story, but this information along with several other clues which I put into the story without realizing it would pinpoint the area too closely. I'm not trying to tantalize anybody, but it's my intention not to reveal the location at this time, so I will stand on my original statement that the black gold is somewhere within the confines of the 1946 map—which was reprinted on Page 37 of the March DESERT.

Joe Young's letter probably puzzled most people, but it is clear to me. Here is what he means: I've already



explained in the story my theory of the origin of the Pegleg gold nuggets and how they were alluviated by being washed down a stream. Heavier than surrounding material, the gold nuggets worked deeper and deeper into stream bed, until they reached bedrock along with larger, heavier rocks. Sometimes underground ledges of bedrock tilt and act as a trap, catching fabulous pockets of gold nuggets. The dream of all placer miners is to find a trap or pocket in bedrock without too much overburden or material piled on top. Under normal conditions, the heavy nuggets would not be found on top of the lighter sand and gravel. In my story I said some of the nuggets were found on top of a hill covered with a crust of water-worn pebbles. Therefore, Joe Young's letter is perfectly logical. Can I explain how the heavy gold nuggets got there in the absence of other heavy material? There are these two points:

(1) Heavy material is there all right, although I deliberately did not describe the location in detail as it would pinpoint the location too closely. (2) I stated in the story that my theory was that after the gold was alluviated, possibly ages ago, there was faulting or shifting of the earth's crust and probably what had once been a stream bed was lifted up or possibly buried completely. Actually, I believe the area where I found the nuggets had been thrust upwards, and in the story I said this. Joe Young did not read the story closely. There is no doubt in my mind that at one time most of the nuggets were on bedrock in a stream bed and were exposed on the surface or close to the surface in the manner I've described.

While I appreciate the letter from Mr. Davis, I will have to decline his kind offer to meet with him as I really don't think there is anything to "discuss what should be done to follow up your story."

I found Mr. Southworth's Pegleg story in last month's DESERT very interesting. He is warmer than he thinks! The small black pebbles found by the railroad man are, in my opinion, real Pegleg black gold nuggets. I stated plainly in my story that I thought there were other places where the black nuggets could be found on or near the surface, although it might be miles away from my own discovery. Mr. Southworth's theory that Indians distributed the nuggets across the desert is possible. I tend to go along with the editor's note on page 16 of the April issue, although if at any time Indians did gather and distribute black nuggets, I'd rather think they found them on the desert,

as I did, and not in the Colorado river. In answer to his questions, I did not find any old springs, but did find a small amount of volcanic activity, and there were a couple of small rock rings similar to the one shown on page 15 of his story. The rings were about two feet in diameter and composed of heavily varnished rocks, indicating they had been in position an extremely long time.

After my own fortunate experience, I will never completely disbelieve any theory or account of lost mines or treasure, but in this case, I believe my theory of the origin of the Pegleg gold is more tenable.

Now then, down to the business of the metal detector. I'm surprised at Mr. Cameron and the rest of you. Here again, none of you read the story closely. Let me make these quick points: 1. No where in my story did I say I found a one ounce nugget two feet underground with a metal detector. All of you had better read the story again! 2. On the day of first discovery I said I found seven more nuggets besides the first one, and which later weighed out from a half-ounce on up to one that went nearly two-ounces. These were all on the surface. 3. My first reference to a metal detector was when I returned 10 days later. I said I found 720 ounces of nuggets and was careful to fill up all holes I dug to recover the nuggets. Where you have all been led astray—partly my fault for omission—was by this sentence: "It was the detector that located the nuggets in the mound as all of them were underground from about four inches to two feet, where I discovered some of the *largest nuggets*." My omission was in not mentioning that the largest nuggets included some that weighed over 10 ounces, including one beauty at 14.36 ounces, which I still have. Throughout the years, I have tried every detector on the market and I am familiar with their limitations, which are considerable. Let me make these further points about detectors which should be of some small help to all of you:

1. Choral Pepper is right when she says that detectors are or can be "geared" to specific kinds of detection.

2. Some aren't worth a damn. My advice to anyone buying a detector is to get the machine that will detect the smallest lump of metal the deepest underground, and not to buy until you've tested them all and found the best one.

3. There are limitations to the best detectors. As Mr. Cameron says in

his letter — which I confirm — I too have yet to see a detector that will detect a one-ounce nugget two feet underground. Nevertheless, there is a vast amount of difference in detectors. The best one I have (I won't mention brand names since I'm not pushing detectors and don't want to get involved in that hassle) will detect a tiny nugget the size of a match head on the surface. I found a lot of them that size, but soon realized I was limited in the size of nuggets I could find at any given depth because of the limits of the detectors.

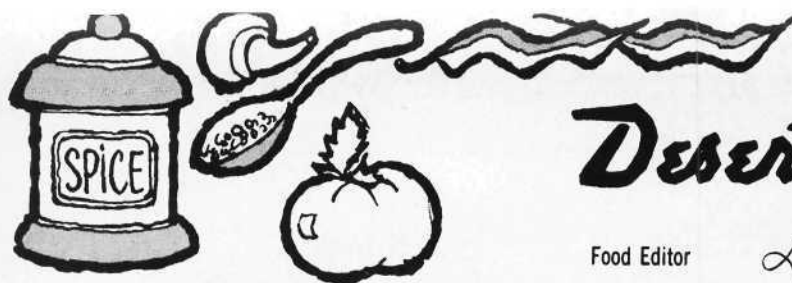
4. Instead of going into all these details in my story, I simply stated that, "I found every nugget both on the surface and underground *within range of the most powerful and sensitive detector*." The biggest black nugget was the 14.36 specimen which was a good 2½ feet underground. Other large nuggets, around 10 ounces, were located as deep as 3½ feet. As I said in my story, I'm sure there are more nuggets underground, probably great quantities of them along the ancient watercourse into which they were washed ages ago. I am sure there are lots of half and one-ounce nuggets two or three feet underground that no detector will detect and, there are undoubtedly smaller nuggets only six inches to a foot underground that can't be detected with any equipment today. This is another of the reasons why I won't reveal the exact location. I have a hunch the electronic industry will come up with an improved detector one of these days that really will detect a one-ounce nugget two feet underground. When they do, I can go out and make another harvest at Pegleg hill and mound.

One thing I forgot to mention in the story is the fact that in addition to the nuggets I sold, I still have plenty of them, about \$25,000. To identify myself each time I write in, I am going to send another black nugget along with each letter. This will also button up some of the "experts" who are probably claiming that some hoax is being instigated and that only "two" nuggets were found instead of the quantity I mentioned in my story. Anyway, if the questions keep coming, a few more of Pegleg's black nuggets will be on display at DESERT Magazine's office.

In closing, let me express my sincere thanks and appreciation for the faith of all the believers who wrote in.

Sincerely,

The man who found  
Pegleg's black gold



# Desert COOKERY

Food Editor

*Lucille Inedale Carlson*

## THE PEPPER'S BAJA SPECIAL

Before you leave home and plenty of water, cook yellow corn meal mush as per instructions on package, but add to the water some minced green pepper, a big dash of paprika, minced onion and a little salad oil before putting in the corn meal. After it has thickened and cooked six minutes, pour into flat broiler pan, spreading mixture about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick. Chill until firm. Cut into squares and separate layers with wax paper. Wrap stacks of squares in foil. Put in ice chest for travel. At campsite, place layer of corn meal squares on bottom of greased Dutch oven. Add a mixture of 1 can Denison's chili con carne without beans and 2 cans whole kernel corn, drained. Top with another layer of corn meal wedges. Place lid on Dutch oven and heap top with coals. Bake over hot coals 45 min. If you have corn meal squares left over, fry remainder on griddle to accompany huevos rancheros for breakfast.

## TEXAS HASH

- 2 onions, sliced
- 1 green pepper, sliced (optional)
- 3 tablespoons shortening
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 can tomatoes
- 1 cup uncooked rice
- 2 teaspoons salt

Cook onions and green pepper in shortening until tender. Add beef, stirring occasionally until it loses its red color. Stir in tomatoes, rice and salt. Cover skillet and cook slowly for an hour. If it isn't thick enough, let it cook uncovered for a few minutes before serving.

## CHILI CON CARNE

- $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. ground beef
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 to 3 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 tablespoon shortening
- Dash black pepper
- 1 can tomato soup
- 2 cans kidney beans

In large skillet, cook beef, onion, garlic and chili powder in shortening, until meat is lightly browned. Add pepper and  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt, then soup and beans. Cover and cook for about 30 minutes, stirring often.

## BEEF STEW

- 2 tablespoons flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon pepper
- 1 lb. cubed beef
- 2 tablespoons shortening
- 1 can tomato soup
- 1 soup can water
- 6 small onions
- 6 small carrots, halved
- 3 potatoes, quartered

Combine flour, salt and pepper, and roll meat cubes in mixture. Brown meat in shortening in heavy skillet. Add soup, water and vegetables. Cover and cook slowly for about an hour or more if necessary. After the vegetables are tender, cook uncovered for 10 minutes to thicken sauce.

## CAMP POTATOES

Peel and slice potatoes in saucepan for required number of servings. Slice a couple of onions and salt and pepper to taste. Add about 1 tablespoon bacon grease to 5 potatoes. Barely cover with water, cover pan and cook down until a small amount of liquid is left.

## HARRY MURPHY'S SOUR DOUGH PANCAKES

To make the starter mix warm water (water that potatoes has been boiled in) with enough flour to make a fairly heavy dough—use a gallon crock if you can find one, but any enamel pot of sufficient size will do. Let stand in a warm place for two or three days until the dough starts to ferment. It will bubble and have a sour smell. A little yeast at the beginning will help, but don't put anything else in your starter, except flour and water.

When it has developed a nice sour smell, try making some hot cakes. To about a quart of dough poured into a mixing bowl, add  $\frac{1}{2}$  level teaspoon of warm water, three beaten eggs and a couple tablespoons of shortening or cooking oil, salt, and a couple of tablespoons of syrup or molasses (for a bronze color). If your batter is too heavy, add canned milk or water, but avoid having the batter too thin to start with as adding flour takes something away from what should be fine hotcakes.

## SAM HICK'S BEEF JERKY

60 pounds of good beef cut into strips, lengthwise with the grain, with fat trimmed close. Strips of meat should be  $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 2" and 4" to 8" long.

- 2½ gals. of water, room temperature
- 3½ lbs. table salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of black pepper
- Juice of 6 lemons

2 tablespoons of garlic salt  
Stir ingredients until salt is dissolved. With solution in a big container, place strips of meat in 2 or 3 layers and soak 15 minutes. A drain should be rigged so the solution from freshly soaked meat can be saved. After draining, hang strips over wires to dry in warm, dry place. Jerky should cure for a week to 10 days, then sack and store in cool, dry place.

## TUNA CHOWDER

Combine 1 can cream of celery soup and 1 can tomatoes in saucepan. Add 1 tablespoon instant minced onion and 1 can tuna with oil. Heat to serving temperature over fire, and serve. Sprinkle with grated cheese.

## CHEESE POTATOES

Cut potatoes in strips as for french frying. Cut squares of foil large enough to cover one serving and seal. Place potatoes on foil, add  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt, 1 tablespoon margarine and 1 tablespoon grated cheese. Seal foil and bury in coals for 30 to 45 minutes. Serve each person one packet.

## PEG LEG CORN BEEF HASH

- 4 medium-size potatoes boiled with skins on
- 1 large onion, sliced thinly
- 1 can corned beef

Butter, margarine or bacon grease  
Melt shortening in skillet, cook onions until tender; add sliced, peeled potatoes and cook until they begin to brown. Add corned beef cut in chunks; stir occasionally. When well heated, serve. If you are to use this recipe in camp, have your potatoes boiled before leaving home. Some like this topped with a fried egg.

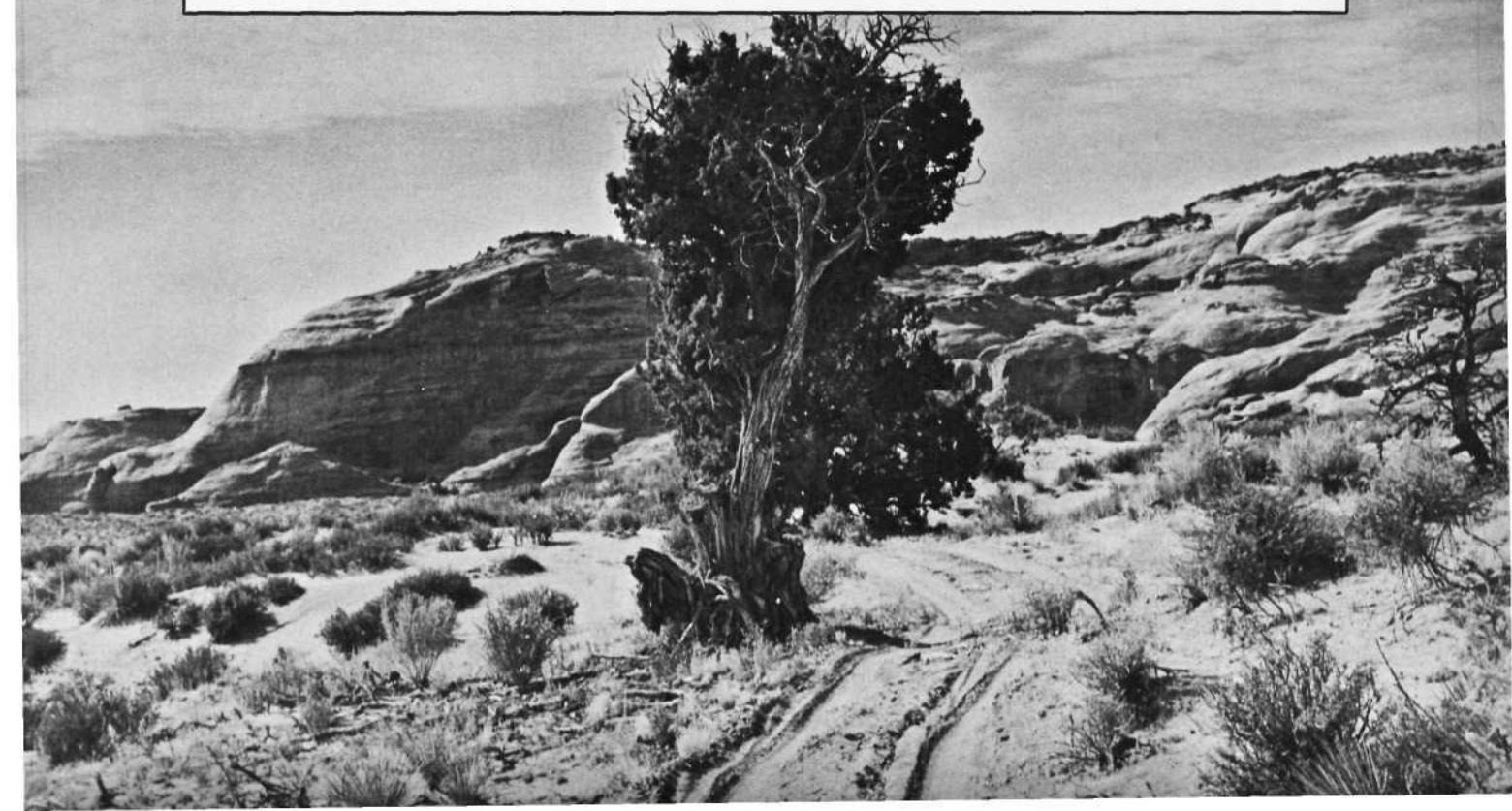


# DESERT JUSTICE

BY

*Erle Stanley Gardner*

**SYNOPSIS of PART I:** When the sheriff lifted the blanket from the corpse, Eve Sharon recoiled in horror. The stiff, distorted body was that of her uncle, Dudley Sharon. Prospecting an isolated desert region, he had uncovered a rich vein of gold-bearing quartz. While he drove to town to check on its status and to file a claim, he pitched Eve's tent over the outcrop and left her to guard the site. During the night a cry for help emanated from an abandoned shaft. When Eve went to help, her tent burst into flames. Two men appeared to accuse her of having jumped their claim. Leaving camp in the dark, alone, she was rescued by a mysterious man named Jon LeClaire who roams the desert in an odd vehicle of his own design and has a reputation for being available whenever trouble occurs. In desert regions he is known as The Roadrunner.



## PART II

The events which followed were a nightmare. Other county officials were hurriedly summoned. An officious deputy district attorney was openly skeptical. Eve's story, under his cross-examination, was made to sound even more implausible.

The two men who had located the claim told a straightforward story. They said they had been camped on the other side of the slope. They had located a claim two days before, had gone to town for more provisions, returned after dark, and were making camp when they saw a blaze of light from the other side of the ridge.

Climbing hurriedly, they had seen a tent on fire and, of course, thinking of claim jumpers, had gone over to investigate.

The dog which was with them had been put on a leash.

They had encountered Eve, had heard her story, and thought that it was so utterly implausible that it was a ruse to decoy them off the claim. So they had told her to walk back to the road, convinced that she had a car and an accomplice waiting nearby.

And when they mentioned the car and the accomplice, they looked meaningfully at Jon LeClaire.

LeClaire, puffing on a briar pipe, simply grinned back at the two men.

The deputy district attorney said, "We've tracked the car that backed up to the mining shaft and from which the body was evidently taken and dumped down into the shaft. We have a pretty good moulage of the tire tracks which we picked up from various places where it went through soil which retained the tracks. We can tell the make of the tires and, sooner or later, we'll find the car."

He turned to Eve and said, "But there's one thing certain, Miss Sharon. You were mistaken in thinking you heard groaning noises from the bottom of that shaft. That's a straight drop of two hundred and seven feet."

"I can't help it," Eve said. "I heard groaning noises."

"Might have been mining timbers that had been hit by a body falling," LeClaire volunteered.

The deputy district attorney whirled on him. "We don't need any suggestions from you, Mr. LeClaire," he said.

"My mistake. Thought you did," LeClaire said.

Eve's manner was tense. She knew that an investigation would show that her uncle had been seriously interested in a young widow. Possible marriage might well have had a disastrous effect on Eve's financial status.

Would the authorities go into that?

She soon realized that they had already done so.

Late that afternoon, a helicopter discovered her uncle's car where it had been driven into some thick brush within a couple of miles of the mining claim. Within an hour of the discovery, it had been determined that the tracks of the car approaching the mining shaft had been made by the tires of Dudley Sharon's own car. And spots on the front seat and floorboards of the car had been identified as human blood of the same type as that of Dudley Sharon.

By midnight, Eve was under arrest for her uncle's

murder, and the deputy district attorney was strongly intimating that Jon LeClaire might be arrested as an accomplice—depending on what additional evidence was introduced at the preliminary hearing.

LeClaire was sternly ordered not to go anywhere, except with official permission.

Eve had never before realized the extent to which a deadly, damaging case could be built up by circumstantial evidence.

The deputy district attorney who conducted the preliminary examination made what even Eve had to admit was a strong case.

Eve's uncle, Dudley Sharon, had been relatively well-to-do. For years, he had made no secret of the fact that Eve, his niece, was to be the sole beneficiary under his will.

Then, of late, Dudley Sharon had become interested in this young widow, Rosalene Knox, an attractive woman who testified on the stand that Dudley had proposed marriage to her; that he had been accepted, but had asked that their engagement be kept a secret while he found some way of "breaking the news" to Eve. The prosecutor insisted that this would mean a big change in Eve's status, as Dudley Sharon had stated that after his marriage he intended to make his new wife the sole beneficiary under his will as he felt she should be the primary object of his bounty and Eve was young enough to make a new life for herself.

The prosecutor claimed that Dudley Sharon had uncovered a rich outcropping of ore. It was his individual discovery. Eve would not necessarily share in it. They had pitched a tent over the rich strike and started for the county seat. At some point along the road, Eve had bludgeoned her uncle to death, waited until dark, driven the car to the mining shaft, pitched the body in, concealed the car a couple of miles away in thick bushes, walked back to the camp, set the tent on fire, and concocted a story about hearing her uncle staggering toward camp calling for help—then screaming that he was falling and, subsequently, hearing moanings and groanings from the depth of the mining shaft.

Skillfully, the prosecution showed the defects in Eve's story.

An autopsy surgeon testified that her uncle had been dead before the body had been dropped into the mining shaft. Therefore, there could have been no moanings or groanings.

Dudley Sharon had been killed in his car and his car had been driven to the mining shaft where the body had been dumped. There was no indication that he had ever walked on foot toward the camp, and no tracks of his distinctive boots had been found approaching the camp, other than the tracks made in the vicinity of the location of the tent and the rich strike.

Evidently, the tent had been deliberately set afire by the use of gasoline from the can which was generally used to fill the gasoline lantern, after the canvas had been soaked and a lighted match had been tossed. The resulting fire had been a fierce blaze.

A proper location notice and proper monuments backed up the story of the men who said they had located the claim two days before, although they admitted they had no inkling of the rich outcropping. They insisted, however, that this outcropping was on the claim they had located and was a part of the quartz vein that they had used as a discovery site.



Eve had been aghast at the picture which had been painted so masterfully of her as a deliberate murderess.

And then, her attorney had received a note—a note which said simply, "Get a continuance until tomorrow at ten o'clock. Agree to put on evidence at that time."

The note had been signed simply "The Road-runner."

The prosecution rested.

The harassed defense attorney asked for and was granted a continuance. He had no alternative.

Dawn was breaking in the eastern sky.

Out in the desert, Jon LeClaire strung wires from the tape recorder he had planted during the night.

As it became light enough to see, he threw a switch.

The wheels of the battery-powered tape recorder started revolving. A faint voice called for help—then again, "Help! I'm hurt!"

There were a few moments of silence and then the voice, louder this time, yelled, "Help, help, I'm hurt!" — Then, after another interval of silence, two more cries for help and the scream, "I'm falling!"

The door of the camper opened. A man, attired in underwear and shoes, came dashing out of the camper. A dog followed him.

"Go find 'em! Eat 'em up!" the man ordered.

The dog ran in futile circles around the camper.

Amused, Jon LeClaire watched through the binoculars.

The man in underwear called back to a companion in the camper, "They've found the tape."

"They couldn't have," the man answered.

"Go see," someone ordered.

The man in underwear grabbed a shovel, ran to fifty yards up the ridge and started to dig. He soon came up with a spool of tape. "Here it is," he shouted. "It's a fake . . . It's a trap!"

LeClaire dropped the binoculars into their case, sauntered over to his desert-going "contraption" and started the motor.

It was at that moment that the dog, picking up the man's scent and following his back trail, topped the little rise and saw the man in the desert-going machine.

The dog started barking frantically.

Jon LeClaire eased the machine into rapid motion.


The dog continued to bark frantically.

A man suddenly appeared, stood silhouetted on the ridge—a man who had a rifle.

For a moment, he hesitated, then brought the rifle to his shoulder.

LeClaire whipped the machine with its low center of gravity into a 90-degree turn. A bullet whizzed harmlessly past on his right, and threw up a spurt of dust.

Again, LeClaire whipped the machine into a



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turn. Again, a bullet spattered and the thin sound of the cracking rifle was swallowed up in the desert silence.

A second man appeared.

LeClaire was rapidly getting distance now, and the shooting became more erratic as the weird desert vehicle sailed over the ground—from time to time, leaving the road to make brief excursions up some side hill or taking a short cut down some sandy wash.

After an interval, the firing ceased.

LeClaire slowed down, fished his pipe from his jacket pocket, filled the bowl with tobacco and brought out a lighter.

Judge Pringle had just called Court to order and turned to the attorney who was representing Eve Sharon.

"You have the answers to some of this evidence of the prosecution, and you wanted to put on evidence of your own?"

The attorney seemed undecided.

The door opened and a well-dressed, closely-knit figure came striding into the courtroom. The man walked through the enclosure at the bar, said to the perplexed attorney, "Call me as a witness for the defense and ask me what I know about the case."

With that, he calmly walked over to the witness stand and stood with his hand raised to be sworn.

It was a breathtaking interval before Eve recognized in the well-dressed figure of the clean shaven witness the man she had met in the desert.

"What's your name?" the clerk asked.

"Jon LeClaire."

"What's your address?"

"I don't rightly have any. I'm a prospector."

"Take the stand," the Court ordered.

The attorney hesitated a moment, then said, "What do you know about this case?"

"A great deal," LeClaire said.

The deputy district attorney said, "I want to warn this man that anything he says may be used against him."

"I'm warned," LeClaire smiled.

"Tell us what you know," the attorney said.

"Of your own knowledge," the judge added.

LeClaire said, "I am familiar with evidence. I know that any chain of circumstantial evidence which has a weak link won't stand up."

LeClaire paused. He was no longer the lazy-gaited desert prospector. His words were close-clipped.

"I started looking into the case with the idea that Eve Sharon was telling the simple truth," LeClaire went on. "If that was the case, her uncle had been driving to the county seat in an automobile. I figured he must have met two strangers and . . ."

"What you know of **your own knowledge!**" the judge interposed sharply.

LeClaire smiled at him. "So I put ads in the paper asking for people who had seen a car of that description broken down on the desert.

"Then I started looking the car over for finger-

prints.—I used to be something of a fingerprint expert myself, but I didn't trust myself. After I found some greasy fingerprints that made good latents, I called in a fingerprint expert. We compared the latent fingerprints with fingerprints we had taken from a drinking glass that had been handled in court yesterday by one of the two witnesses who were in the camper on the other side of the hill.

"Now, of course, the worst evidence against Eve is the fact that her footprints were **over** the tracks made by the car which approached the shaft where the body was found, and the fact she said she heard mumbling and moanings after the body had gone down the shaft.

"There was only one way she could have heard sounds like that and that was having them come from the bottom of the shaft. And there was only one way sounds could have come from a dead man and that was by means of some sort of a recording device. So I figured maybe . . ."

"This is all conjecture," the judge interrupted. "We're interested only in the **facts** you discovered. Now, what **facts** do you know?"

LeClaire smiled at him. "I'm coming to that, Your Honor," he said. "After I trapped them and they started shooting at me this morning, I knew I had the right people."

"**Started shooting at you?**" the judge asked incredulously.

"That's right. Shooting with rifles—trying to silence me before I could get to court."

"**Who** shot at you?"

"Why these two men in the camper. The ones who lowered the tape recorder into the shaft and lured Eve Sharon into leaving the tent so they could jump the Sharon claim, set fire to the tent, put up location monuments with a pre-dated location notice—the men who had fixed up all of the evidence. — The same men who made these fingerprints on Dudley Sharon's car when he had motor trouble. — Apparently, some kind of ignition trouble, judging from the location of the fingerprints."

"You yourself know about these fingerprints?" the judge asked. "Or are you testifying to what someone else told you?"

"I know. I compared them myself. I know enough about fingerprints to do that, but I've got a regular expert to back up my testimony.

"The point is, I figured these people had to have a tape recorder that they'd used to lure Eve Sharon out of the tent and that it had been lowered down the mining shaft and then, subsequently, pulled up after Eve left to go and phone the sheriff. They'd hidden that tape but good. So I betrayed them into showing me the location of that tape by a trick."

"What sort of a trick?" the judge asked, his manner now frankly curious.

LeClaire grinned. "Oldest trick of all. I made them think I'd found what they'd hidden, so they ran to the hiding place to see if I really had. Then when they found out they'd been tricked, they knew the jig was up and they started shooting."

"Where are these men now?" the judge asked.

LeClaire shrugged his shoulders. "They've had five hours head start. They've probably got rid of



the camper, stolen a car, and are in another state by this time. But they can be found. We've already identified one of the men from mug shots as being an ex-con. The fingerprints show they're the same men who burglarized a radio and tape recorder store in Salt Lake City a couple of weeks ago."

LeClaire smiled a friendly smile at the bewildered judge.

"You see, Your Honor," he explained, "there was a loose thread nobody tied up. Dudley Sharon had taken a piece of that rich gold quartz in the car with him, and he had a sketch map showing the location of the place where he had found the outcropping so he could check on the registration of the mining claim and see if his discovery was open to location.

"People were so busy trying to pin this crime on Eve Sharon they forgot all about the missing chunk of gold-bearing quartz. A study of the outcropping shows it had been knocked off, all right.

"But what became of it? Nobody bothered to ask that question.

"It wasn't in the car. It wasn't in the tent, and the sketch map showing the location of the strike wasn't in Dudley Sharon's clothes when they searched the body.

"Any loose thread in a murder case is bad. Two loose threads that can't tie up with the prosecution's theory of the case means there's something wrong with the theory.

"So I figured that someone must have been in contact with Sharon, noticed the rich piece of gold

ore on the bottom of the car, and tried to make Sharon tell them where he'd found it, and cut them in on the deal. There was a little ruckus and Sharon got hit over the head.

"Then when the two ex-cons searched him and found the map in his pocket, they didn't need to have him around anymore; so after they found the map, they just finished off the job and scouted the premises—finding out all about Eve being there alone in the tent. So then they decided to jump the claim and frame her uncle's murder on Eve.

"But those men sure forgot they left their fingerprints on the ignition of Dudley Sharon's car, on the back of the rear view mirror, and a couple of other places."

LeClaire turned with a friendly grin to the deputy district attorney and suddenly lapsed into his drawling manner of speech. "You got any questions on cross-examination?" he said.

The deputy district attorney, who had been on his feet ready to make objections, suddenly subsided.

"No questions," he said and sat down.

The sheriff was on his feet. "I'd like to ask a question, Your Honor," he said.

He turned to LeClaire, "I've been hearing about a man they call the Roadrunner, who roams the desert areas and tries to see that justice is done. Are you the Roadrunner?"

LeClaire grinned at him. "The judge warned me I could only testify to things that I knew of my own knowledge. That would be hearsay." **///**

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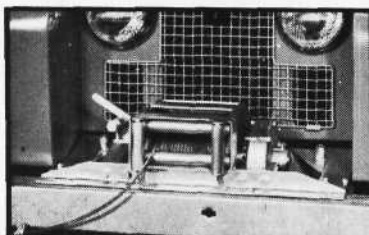
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## ◆ REAL ESTATE

FOR INFORMATION on desert acreage and parcels for sale in or near Twentynine Palms, please write to or visit: Silas S. Stanley, Realtor, 73644 Twentynine Palms Highway, Twentynine Palms, California.

400,000,000 ACRES government land in 25 states. Some low as \$1 acre. 1965 report. Details, send \$1 to National Land, 422-DM, Washington Building, Washington, D.C.

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## ◆ TREASURE FINDERS

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## ◆ WESTERN MERCHANDISE

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BOTTLE COLLECTION, approximately 2000 items (1890-1910), mostly purple. \$300. R. Kallis, 20643 Quedo Drive, Woodland Hills, Calif.

## ◆ MISCELLANEOUS

TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS, western states. Stamp appreciated for each state index. "The Western Sport of Rattlesnake Hunting," book \$2 postpaid. Cutter Snake Bite Kit, \$2.50 postpaid. Campers Dri-Lite Foods, free list. Flint-Stick, 1000 fire, match, \$1 postpaid. Flint-Stick dealers wanted. Jacobsen Suppliers, 9322 California Ave., South Gate, California 90281.

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"HOW TO Develop and Cash In On Ideas"—How ordinary people, from scratch, put ideas into action earning wealth, happiness, independence, \$5. Mark House, Box 1364, San Mateo, California.

# LETTERS

## FROM OUR READERS

Letters requesting answers must include stamped self-addressed envelopes

### Back to the Desert . . .

*To the Editor:* My wife and I eagerly await the delivery each month of your very interesting magazine. In your March issue you published an article, with pictures, of Riverside County's oldest school. The first year the school opened, in 1911, I was the only senior to graduate that year. I was the whole senior class!

We recently purchased a home in Boulder City, Nevada. As soon as we sell our home here, we will spend the rest of our lives roaming the desert. We have indexed articles in *DESERT*, and will use them in planning our desert trips. Thank you for publishing such a fine magazine.

WALTER F. SANDERS,  
Waldport, Oregon.

### Letters About Pegleg Gold . . .

*To the Editor:* My question concerning the black Pegleg nuggets is: What is the finder's theory regarding the black covering of those found underground? How could they have oxidized without air? Also, what did you use to remove the black covering and was it more easily removed from those found underground than from those on the surface?

BILL KNYVETT,  
Palm Springs, California

*To the Editor:* The author of "I Found Pegleg's Black Gold" in your March issue wishes to remain anonymous and I do not blame him. However, I would like to forward some information which would be of definite aid in the recovery of additional nuggets using only his past methods of operation, a metal detector and small shovel. I am not speaking of the casual claims of persons who use divining rods, witching sticks, etc. The operation I am referring to has been used with absolute results on a hilltop east of Oroville, California to locate nuggets from one to six feet deep. The method does and will work and if gold still remains at your location down to six feet, I can personally guarantee results. I will offer to pay the cost of using this system of recovery should it prove futile. It will take two or three days and will not exceed \$300. At present I do not wish to reveal this method to the general public, but I would like to make it available to the Author of the story. I feel as he does concerning the possibility of more and larger nuggets just beyond the range of his metal detector.

The author could write me using a fictitious name and a General Delivery Post Office address in any town and I will promptly send the complete operation by return mail. In this way he can remain anonymous and use the information as he alone sees fit. I feel that my information should be passed on to another at a time like this and would be delighted if my assistance should further the operation to the total satisfaction of all concerned.

ROY H. DRIVER,  
Fresno, California.

*To the Editor:* There are several reasons why desert varnish does not explain the blackness of the nuggets, as you suggested in your box in the April issue with the Southworth article. The anonymous writer has the most logical explanation. Considering the assay—70% gold, 20% silver, 10% copper—cupri oxide is black, so the writer's conclusion that the black color was due to copper oxide is more reasonable than due to desert varnish. My theory is that the color may be in part, or wholly, due to copper sulfide and silver sulfide. These do not take long to form, as anyone who lets a silver dish go without polishing well knows. I would like to know if the author used nitric acid to dissolve the black coating? To the extent that copper salts dissolved, the solution would have been green or blue. If silver had dissolved also, he could have poured in a little salt water and a white curdy precipitate would have resulted.

OSCAR L. BRAUER, Ph.D.,  
San Jose, California

*To the Editor:* Re the article in the March issue of *DESERT* Magazine, would the author be willing to disclose the location of "Pegleg Hill" to me if I agreed to form a company to mine the gold still in that area, entirely at my expense, and with no further responsibility on his part, with the stipulation that his share would be left to him direct, or to some worthy charity of his choice—say, like Boystown?

R. E. DOTY,  
La Jolla, California.

*To the Editor:* Having given some of the juiciest years of my life to the creation and early survival of *DESERT* Magazine and having written a masterpiece many years later entitled "On the Trail of Peg Leg Smith's Lost Gold," (published in 1957), I am completely and properly pushed into oblivion by the anonymous writer of "I Found Peg Leg's Black Gold" in your March issue. It doesn't bother me that the gold was found, or at least that some hardy person stumbled upon some "black nuggets" and found a way to turn them into a tidy fortune, but it does bother me that the "myth" is thereby exploded. I roamed the deserts for 10 years or more before and after Randall and I created *DESERT* Magazine, but I can't recall that I ever sought or found a bit of gold. The stories of lost mines always fascinated me, but they never caused me to dig. Like Harold Weight, I preferred to dig the story—and in digging I gained a lot in experiencing the beauty of the desert. Frankly, I wrote the Peg Leg booklet because the myths were more exciting to me than the black pieces of metal.

Perhaps your nameless writer tells a true story, and if he does I commend him for his astuteness. But I'm still mildly skeptical. And I hope people with an adventurous spirit will continue to search for the "Lost Peg Leg" for a long, long time. Because in the searching, they may find something more important than black gold.

J. WILSON McKINNEY,  
San Mateo, California

*To the Editor:* Legends of Lost Mines most generally are of the theme of a handful of nuggets or a piece of float or ledge being the proof of the mine, which puts me in mind of a story. A prospector named Paddy excitedly showed a piece of rich ore to the geology professor of McGill University saying, "What do you think of my mine?" The professor removed an envelope from his pocket, slowly unfolded it, and removed a solitary hair from a horse's tail. Handing the hair to Paddy, he said, "What do you think of my race horse?"

W. M. TAYLOR,  
Le Selva Beach, California.

*To the Editor:* As one of the writers of Pegleg lore, I am hugely interested in the finding of the black nuggets. Unless the discoverer is making the story up from start to finish, it's fully plausible. If he is making it up, I'll cheerfully yield to him my crown as all-time champion liar of the SW desert, accorded to me by judges at the Pegleg liar's contest. The nuggets are solid evidence, the probable sites fit, the writer is conservative and I congratulate him, tentatively at least. It's less important that he is wrong about dates—Pegleg was there about 1829 and it had to be before the '49 days. BUT, if the finder thinks there won't be a brand new stampede down there, he is about to be surprised!

HOWARD D. CLARK,  
Yucca Valley, California.

*To the Editor:* I'm positive I met the man who found the Pegleg gold. I've got one of his nuggets. His story in the March issue cleared up something I've wondered about. I've spent summers for 15 years in Alaska and Canada and winters in Arizona. About 5 or 6 years ago I was in a jewelry store in Nome, Alaska, getting a crystal put in my watch. A man came in and poured out a poke of nuggets to sell to the jeweler. Being a prospector, I couldn't resist picking up one. I noticed that it had been cleaned, probably in acid, as the gold was clean even down in the crevices. Nuggets look more natural when they're tarnished a bit and most people prefer them that way, so I asked why he'd cleaned them, but he just played it cool, claiming he liked them that way. I tried to draw him out, but he wasn't talking. I figured he'd found a good strike and was cleaning them so an experienced man couldn't tell which district or creek they came from by their color and appearance—which an experienced man can tell if they're left in a natural state. The jeweler bought the nuggets and after the man left, I bought one from the jeweler. The story in *DESERT* explained the whole business. I'm sure the nugget I'm looking at right now is the same as yours.

Personally, I would have been suspicious of the story if it hadn't been for my experience in Nome. But now I take off my hat to him. He was smart enough to keep the gold and handle it the right way, which few men would do. He deserves it all. I'm getting ready to head north again, but think I'll go over first and spend a few weeks looking for the rest of the Pegleg gold.

A. W. CLAWSON,  
Wickenburg, Arizona.



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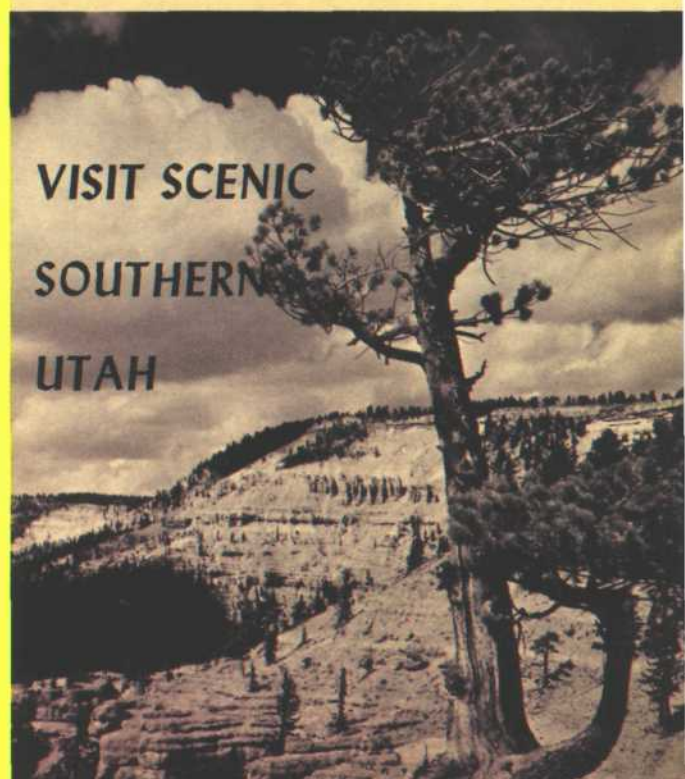
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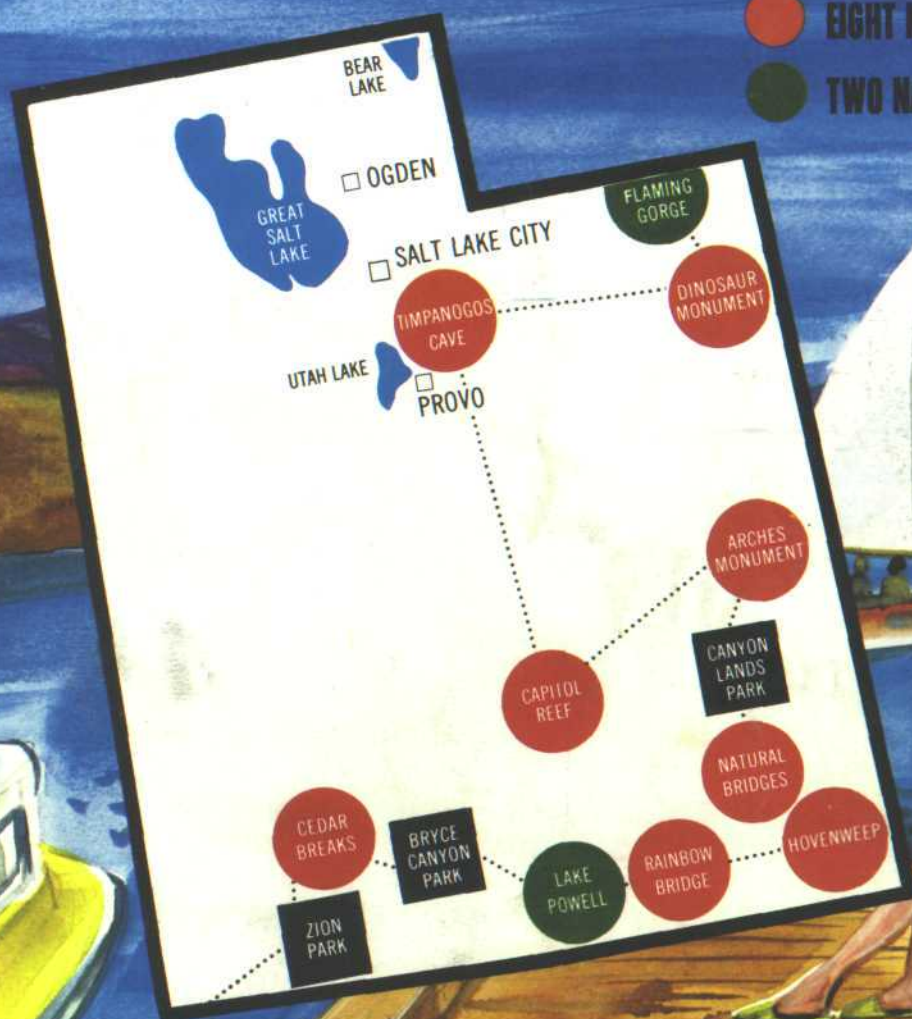


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